Interview with Wat Tyler Cluverius IV

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

AMBASSADOR WAT TYLER CLUVERIUS, IV

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy

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Q: Today is May 31, 1990 this is an interview with Ambassador Wat Tyler Cluverius on his career. I am Charles Stuart Kennedy and this is being done on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies. I wonder, could you give me a little about your background first, where you'd come from?

CLUVERIUS: I was born into and raised in the US Navy in which my family had served for generations. I was born near Boston and grew up in the Navy during World War II, living all over the United States as the family followed my father's home ports. At the end of the war my father left the Navy and we settled in Chicago when I was just turning 13. I went to High School in Chicago and on to Northwestern University—starting out in Chemical Engineering but graduating in Journalism. The math did me in. My military service was as a Naval Officer, from summer 1957 until the summer of 1962. I served in Washington and then went off to study Arabic for a year in Monterey 1959-1960, which was a honeymoon tour since I had married Judith Dvorovy of Chicago in June of 1959. We then went to Cyprus for two years where I was loosely attached to the Embassy. The Middle East interested me and it was unlikely I would be able to stay in that field in the Navy so I left. I worked for a couple of years in Chicago in a chemical company, trying to save money and looking around for the right academic environment; meaning, the one that would match the

money that I would have. I was granted a NDEA fellowship in Indiana University in Arabic Language and Literature. That carried me through a Ph.D. program in political science —comparative politics, stress on the Middle East, obviously. I was there from 64-67; got my Masters and basically my ABD. Never did my dissertation, took all the exams and was admitted to candidacy but then joined the Foreign Service and left right after my oral exams to get sworn into the Foreign Service. We left Bloomington in a blizzard, my wife, son, me and our cat packed into an old VW with most of our belongings.

After the basic officers' course, we were assigned first to Yemen but there was a sudden problem there and instead of a POL job in Sanaa I was offered either a job in the Department or the Consular job in Jeddah. I chose Jeddah and we went off by ship, the USS Independence, on June 1, bound for Naples and then onward by air to Saudi Arabia. The Arab-Israel war started while we were crossing the Atlantic. There were many Foreign Service and military families on board so, when we got to Lisbon, one of the more senior foreign service officers went to the Embassy and called the Department for instructions. The response was that everybody stay on the ship and we'll try to get instructions to people in Naples. Meanwhile, we're busy and don't bother us. So we arrived in Naples and indeed the Consulate had instructions for most of us. Of course, most of the people were going to posts in Southern Europe, no problem. But a lot of them were going into Middle Eastern posts. Middle Eastern posts that had been closed, burned down and relations with the US had been broken.

[Interruption for tea and to check tape]

CLUVERIUS: So most of them got orders to go back to the States. People on the way to Algiers, people on their way to Egypt and other places. But relations were not broken with Saudi Arabia. I was told to hold in Naples and wait for instructions on how to get to Saudi Arabia after the war when airlines could fly again into the area. risks were over. My wife and young son and I had a very nice time in Naples. The cat was in Chicago. After about 10 days we were told to fly to Istanbul; a Saudi plane was reported to be coming from

Germany, through Istanbul to Jeddah and we should get on it. Off we went to Istanbul and rested for a few days there, haunting the Saudi office, and then flew into Jeddah near the end of June 67.

Q: Well, when you were in Jeddah, first post, you had already qualified in Arabic by this time.

CLUVERIUS: Yes, because I had the Arabic when I was in the Navy. I had spent a year at Monterey. And then of course I did my stuff when I was in Indiana University. So I didn't have to stay in Washington after taking the basic officers course. I was sworn into the Foreign Service in Feb. 67. Did the basic course, didn't have to get off language probation as so many did; I was already off as far as FSI was concerned. So I landed in Jeddah with pretty good Arabic. My first Ambassador was Hermann Fr. Eilts, who was a fantastic teacher for young officers. I had another unusual advantage. The '67 war had ended just a few weeks before I arrived. There had been a great deal of anxiety within the American community there from reports of threats and the fact of attacks on Americans and American installations all over the Middle East. There had been a small bomb in the Embassy compound wall in Jeddah and there had been riots at the Consulate General in Dhahran. I recall being told by Embassy staff members that Washington had considered closing the Embassy and evacuating the Americans and that the General in Command of the US base at Dhahran had made preparations to do this; evacuating Americans as we were doing in Syria and other places at this time. Eilts, I was told, told Dean Rusk that if he wanted to evacuate this relationship, he would have to get someone else out there to do it; he, Eilts would not. The King had assured him that he wanted the Americans to stay and that they would be protected. There were all sorts of reports that the French, in particular, were quietly telling some Saudis, that if the Americans pulled out they would help the Saudis buy arms and would even help in running ARAMCO. The French were in there for some profit taking, as I understood it.

My advantage as a young officer was that the King had told Eilts that until things cooled off, he didn't want to see any diplomats up in Riyadh. As you know the capital was Riyadh but the diplomatic capital was Jeddah and there was not even a paved road between the two until, I believe, April of 67. It was all done by Saudi Air. The Ambassador replied that he understood the King's position that he wanted things to cool off. Riyadh then had so few foreigners in it that it would have been quite visible if the usual parade of Embassy staffers were in town. But there was a small American business community in Riyadh. There was an ARAMCO office there, a small military training mission and there may have been 500 people or something in that range. And these people were very nervous about their own safety and they were very used to having the American consul from Jeddah come up once a month, do all the consular services and hold their hands at that tense time. The King said, all right, the consul can still come up once a month and stay for a few days but nobody else until, basically, further notice. Eilts agreed to that and since I was the only consular officer, I went up to do most Embassy business for 4 or 5 months. I took everybody's business. If the PAO, the Public Affairs Officer, needed the lease on his house renegotiated with the owner who lived in Riyadh, I did that. If there were some discussions to be held on any subject with any ministry, I would do that. Obviously, I did not do the Ambassador's work which he could do in Jeddah with the Foreign Ministry there. For me, it was fantastic training; I was on my first assignment and I was doing economic work, political work, defense attach# work, whatever, on my own, five hundred miles from the boss in a place where the phones seldom worked very well.

Q: Far more than you would probably much see later.

CLUVERIUS: Yes, doing it all plus holding the hand of the community. Of course I was older than most entering foreign service officers of that era; I was 32 at the time, the oldest in our entering class. But it was wonderful training and of course Hermann Eilts was a wonderful trainer for junior officers. He was less famous for getting along as well with his senior officers because in a sense he did not need them. He had extraordinary energy, but

what he really needed and used most of his ambassadorial career was himself and 3 or 4 ambitious, energy-filled young officers. So, it was not easy to be the DCM or section chief for Hermann. He liked to work with the young ones. Later he worked with April Glaspie, now Ambassador to Iraq, in Cairo who was kind of the day-to-day link between Eilts and Sadat during those critical months right after the '73 war. I stayed in Jeddah for 2 years, a standard first tour abroad, and was Consul for one year and worked as a junior pol/econ officer the second year.

Q: Well now this is your first real experience inside the Foreign Service. Did you get any feel for what sort the Arabists of the American Foreign Service were like? What were their attitudes towards Israel, towards Saudi Arabia and other ones? What sort Of emanations were you picking up as you came in?

CLUVERIUS: You had the emanations that many of the older Arabists basically believed that Harry Truman's support for the creation of the state of Israel was a real thorn in the side of all our relations with the Arab states. So there was a certain. amount of routine anti-Israel atmosphere. But again I was fortunate that Ambassador Eilts did not share this. He was not your routine Arabist. I recall one occasion that something outrageous happened — the Israelis did something outrageous— and Embassy Beirut sent a cable around the horn in the Arab world and to Washington urging Washington to take this and that public posture against Israel on this issue. And whatever the merits of it, I remember Eilts saying in a staff meeting that no way was he going to join that demarche to Washington because he did not agree with it. And because we can't have all this knee-jerk reaction coming out of all the Arab posts; if we do, we're just going to be ignored in Washington. Near the end of my tour in 69 he came into my office one day; he was never one these guys who just sit behind their desks. He said—what does the Department have in mind for you? I said, I heard there's a job in INR and a junior desk job in NEA somewhere. He said—don't respond, I'll get you your next job. I'm going to a Chief of Missions meeting and I'll talk to some people. And when I come back, I'll have your next job for you. What am I going to say but, yes sir! You know when an Ambassador says he's going to take a hand in your

career, you let it happen. He came back and he said that you're going to Israel. And at that time it was kind of a belief among the Middle Eastern specialists that if you served in Israel, thereafter you'd be tainted for further service in the Arab world.

Q: I was going to say that there was almost an unacceptability if you once served there you couldn't go somewhere else. At least that was the word of mouth.

CLUVERIUS: Yes, that was the image. Now there were already two Middle Eastern experts in the Embassy in Tel-Aviv. I was to go and do an economic-AID job and then move into the political section later. There were 2 guys there already. Maybe 3, let me think. Yes, Hayward Stackhouse was political counselor and he had a Middle Eastern background. Not a pure background, shall we say, he had served elsewhere and all of that. David Korn was there at the time. Also he had done western Arabic and I think he did one tour in Beirut. David, it soon became apparent, didn't give a damn whether he served in the Arab world again. He became very much an Israel partisan. Hayward Stackhouse just did it because it was an intellectual thing to do. The 3rd guy who had done Arabic and served in the Arab world was Jay Freres in the political section. And those were the first 3 so-called Arabists, a label I don't like, to serve in Embassy-Tel Aviv. And they were all still there, so no one knew what their onward careers would look like. But Eilts told me this tour in Tel Aviv would make my career. So I went to Tel-Aviv in the summer of 1969.

Q: Who was the Ambassador then?

CLUVERIUS: Oh, the Ambassador was Walworth Barbour. He eventually left a few years later after being ambassador there for 13 years. He was quite an interesting old character. Wally Barbour served in Baghdad in the late 30's and didn't like it; he was Minister in Cairo during World War II and didn't like that very much. But he pretty much ran the top policy and all the major policy of the Embassy with the government of Israel out of his hip pocket. He had tremendous clout in Washington and with the American Jewish community. In fact, I accidentally discovered in 71 that most initiatives that the US was considering in the

region, ones that might be sensitive, were informally at least cleared with Wally Barbour, including instructions to our Embassy, or, rather, our interests section in Cairo. Things were cleared with Barbour to see if they would upset the Israelis or not. So I arrived in the summer of 69 and did this econ-AID job. Which turned out to be absolutely fascinating because it was only 2 years after the war. Our AID relationship that we had had with Egypt for the Palestinian refugees in Gaza had been transferred to the Embassy in Tel Aviv. Supervision of the voluntary agencies like CARE, Catholic Relief Services, Lutheran World Federation, that we had with Jordan in the West Bank, were now administered out of Embassy Tel-Aviv. And that was my portfolio. Gaza was then dangerous. There was an organized resistance down there at the time. Not like the Intifada, it was more based on cells and the PLFP, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, rather than on popular sentiment as was the intifada. So, I was the only Embassy officer allowed to go to Gaza. I covered Gaza both in the economic-aid sense, particularly working with CARE, which had huge programs down there—Food for Peace, Food for Work, and all of that kind of thing. I did both the politics and the economic aid supervision and reporting for Gaza. On the West Bank it was a little more complicated because that's the turf of the Consulate General in Jerusalem. But they couldn't administer these aid programs because to do so one had to deal with the Israeli military and civilian occupation authorities. The Israeli authorities in general and the Israeli occupation authorities would never deal with the consulate and vice-versa. So on the West Bank my responsibility was strictly supervision of the aid programs but obviously I went and saw things and saw people that the consulate people didn't. I would work with somebody in the consulate and we would jointly do the political reporting. I became early on something of a Palestinian expert.

Q: Well I want to move back to Saudi Arabia. How did you find the Saudi officials, since you were dealing with them quite a bit in Riyadh, how did you judge them to be?

CLUVERIUS: Now that was before they became truly rich. You could look back in history I suppose and see what the price of a barrel of oil was but it wasn't very much. So although there was a lot of money around, nothing like what they had 10 years later. As a result

they were quite open. They had not yet been totally besieged by every kind of scheme, businessman, legitimate or not. They hadn't become a real target yet to be ripped off. Which they later were, got stung on how many hundreds of buildings and projects, and things like that. And closed themselves off. They were quite open then. It was much easier to get to know a Saudi. Still there was a reserve. You didn't get to go to their homes very often but more than in later years. I found it fascinating. They don't have a great sense of humor, But they're very honest. A lot of business was done with a handshake. Later on of course they had to hire all the law firms in the world to protect themselves. So I think it was a lot more open and an interesting place to be. You still saw a lot of the traditional culture. Riyadh in those days had very few stop lights and not many paved streets. All the ministries were lined up from the airport down towards the center. You could walk from one to the other. You could casually go in and knock on a guy's door and see him. Within about 5 years after that, maybe a little more, you had to have an appointment. It might take you a month to see a mid-level official. It was a much more open and interesting place particularly for a junior officer. Our senior officers probably later on had more access. But for a junior officer it was great. It was amazing access. In Jeddah, too. Sometimes I would go up the street from the Embassy to the home of Omar Saqqaf with a note from the Ambassador. I'd learned to type Arabic pretty well and could get something done for the boss on the weekends.

Q: Omar Saqqaf?

CLUVERIUS: The Minister of State for Foreign Affairs. The Embassy then was on an unpaved track that led off the Jeddah-Medina Road; the unpaved track had the name of Palestine Street, of all things. There were a lot of 4-wheel vehicles, land rovers, you really drove, to get to the Embassy—you had to tell someone to go out on the Medina Route, turn left at the Lebanese market, the Embassy is right down at the end, with a white cinder block wall around it. We called it Fort Apache, with the flag sticking out of the sand. On occasion, I would type up a note on the weekend for the Ambassador and take it up to Omar's house, knock on the door and he would usually be in the pool floating on

a mattress. He would have a cup of coffee brought to me while he would take the note and float out to the middle of his swimming pool, which was one of the few in Jeddah at the time. He'd read it and come back to the edge of the pool and say, tell the Ambassador “thus and so.” So it was a much more casual environment then it certainly is today.

Q: Well a little compare and contrast. Again at your level, how did you find coming to Israel and dealing with Israeli authorities. Was this quite a change?

CLUVERIUS: I think that was the only time in my life I really felt culture shock. I didn't feel it the first time I lived abroad in the Navy which was in Cyprus. I didn't feet it so much when I went to Saudi Arabia because I had the language. I went over a weekend, flew from Jeddah, had a new baby ... my wife took my son and the new baby home to the States for a couple of months. We had some health problems with the baby in Jeddah. So we all flew to Beirut where I put my wife and two kids on the plane to Chicago via Europe. I spent a few hours in the Beirut airport then flew to Cyprus, stayed a couple of days, saw some friends (I had lived there in 60-62) and then flew directly into Tel Aviv. So that was quite a culture shock. Here's a place that's a mixture of Europe and, perhaps, of Eastern Europe, totally different language, noisy, didn't know the language. Although I soon discovered that all the business of Israel is done in English. If you're dealing with, shall we say, the lower social-economic spectrum like cabdrivers and waiters and folks like that, they speak Arabic because they're Sephardi. So I found the Arabic kind of useful. And professionally the English was useful. As a result, although I studied Hebrew, I never became very good at it. But I also had a kind of access for a relatively junior guy which was that the Israelis were very interested in what we were doing for the occupied territories, obviously. They were interested that we do it right, they were interested in being cooperative, because the success of a Care program or Catholic Relief Services Program, is good for Israel?s image and something that they don't have to spend money on. It helps keep the population quiet if social services are being delivered. So I had resources so to speak for certain Israeli officials in the Ministry of Social Welfare and the Ministry of Defense, which had overall responsibility for the occupation. So I had good access. I discovered that the Israelis, of

course, have a kind of permanent chip on their shoulder. A tendency to automatically, so to speak, adopt the attitude—if you're not 100 percent, if you're only 99 percent with us then you're probably an enemy of some kind. There is a bit of that. But then again they were in the glow of their 67 victory ...

Q: I was going to ask, this must have been sort of the height of self-confidence.Because later on things weren't quite as...

CLUVERIUS: This was the height of self-confidence, the phrase “that they were still waiting for the phone call from Hussein,” was very popular. They'd won a tremendous victory. They couldn't quite believe, I think, that the Arab world didn't have to come to them. They felt that they could make peace very much on their terms. They didn't understand that as a population, so to speak, even as a political culture, they didn't really understand that the Arabs had lost a war but, so what, the Arabs could just turn their backs on Israel and go about their other business in the world. They didn't have to come to Israel's terms. The Israelis didn't understand that. Obviously there were some intellectuals who did. But as a political culture they certainly did not. I was quite a unique bird really. The Israelis were fascinated by someone who had just come from the Arab world. Particularly Saudi Arabia which was a real enigma to the Israelis. The Jordanians they had known, the Egyptians they had intercourse with-usually violent but they had some contacts. So it was fascinating. The other 3 guys who had studied Arabic in the Embassy—Stackhouse, Korn and Freres, hadn't been to the Arab world just before they'd been there, as I recall. I found that the Israelis, if they thought you were biased against them, you'd never get through. If they felt you had an open mind, and would listen, after awhile then you could really argue. You could really make close friends. But you had to first prove that you weren't basically anti-Jewish or anti-Israeli. That you didn't believe all the Arab propaganda, that you believed some of what they said. Once you established your openness to them and heard them out, and after you became somewhat friendly, you could have the most wild arguments. You could really hammer and tongs it with them. And it wouldn't damage the relationship. I enjoyed it enormously for that reason and of course

ultimately I ended up spending 8 years of my life living in Israel in 3 different assignments. I did the econ-aid job from summer of '69 to summer of' ' 71, when I became number two in a three or four person political section.

Q: In that economic-aid job, what was your impression of how the Israeli authorities and maybe how the Israeli people were treating or looking upon the people of the Gaza strip in the West Bank?

CLUVERIUS: That's a good question and I think it's worth recording somewhere that at the beginning the attitude was as Abba Eban had told Washington, very carefully, right at the end of the war. That Israel had no territorial ambitions vis-a-vis Egypt or Jordan; that the Golan and Jerusalem were going to be special cases. But there were some special holy sites in addition to Jerusalem which would have to have special treatment, such as Hebron. They did sort of see themselves as holding this as a card for negotiations which they felt had to come and had to come on their terms. Because the other side had been so soundly beaten. They did keep this trust very carefully at first, unlike much later. They appointed really top officers to be the military government types, really top lawyers to sort out the legal complexities of occupation. They had Arabic speakers, they had officers who were on they way up. When I was in Gaza in '69 or '70, somewhere in there, Mordechai Gur was military governor and later rose to Attach# in Washington and Chief of Staff, now a member of the Knesset of the Labor Party; very bright articulate kinds of guys ran the occupation. They did see themselves as administrators of a civilian population. They were holding this in trust so to speak, a card to play for the future. They were quite open to local initiatives and didn't want to interfere in any more than they absolutely had to. There was a debate within the Labor Party at the time that they shouldn't let too many people from the territories work in Israel proper, because that would distort the nature of Jewish labor in the Jewish state. That was quite a dispute with Eban being against it and Dayan as Minister of Defense in favor of large-scale use of Arab labor in Israel because people needed work; if you were going to administer people you have to feed them yourself or let them have a job where they could feed themselves. Dayan won because the pressure of the community

was such that they wanted this cheap labor. Particularly the Sephardi community which was at the bottom of the Israeli social-economic ladder.

Q: Sephardis being the ones mainly from the Arab world where as the founders of Israel, the elite, had come from East Europe.

CLUVERIUS: That's right. These were the people mostly from Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Iraq, Yemen. So as the Arabs came in from the occupied territories to become the street sweepers and the stoop laborers they moved the Sephardis up the ladder almost automatically. But all of this was done with great debate. I think a very principled debate within the party, within the society. Should we have 10,000 work permits or should we have 5,000. Of course later they became totally open. Should the Arabs be eligible for certain health services and other things like that. How do you pay them? The Histadrut insisted they be paid the same as a Jewish worker and that deductions be held back. And for a while they were, I think. The national health and all of that was taken out. But of course the fund I suspect has disappeared. But there was all of this going on. So it was a fascinating period. Of course the phone calls from Hussein never came. There was the War of Attrition between Egypt and Israel in '70-'71. I remember one of the rare occasions when anybody else would go into Gaza from the Embassy. The DCM, Owen Zurhellen, quite an activist fellow, really wanted to see it. So the Israelis took him down there with me and I think Gur was still military governor and OC Southern Command was Arik Sharon. He had the military control in the Sinai, all of the Sinai. And that was the day it looked like the US would arrange the cease-fire along the Canal. Which was, you will remember, artillery duels and occasional air battles. I was sitting at the bottom of the table with my contacts in Gaza, military government guys, at this lunch and these social welfare types and all of that. The DCM was sitting at the head of the table with Arik Sharon and the military governor. It wasn't that big a table but it was fascinating amongst my guys, my side of the table. They were all very pleased that this war of attrition was going to be over. It was taking a toll and some of these guys were just reservists. And it was great that the US was helping to broker the cease-fire. At the other end of the table Sharon was saying that

this was a mistake, that we should use the War of Attrition to cross the canal and go to Cairo and force peace on these people on our terms. That kind of thing. Quite a belligerent chap.

Q: I'd like to get a little feel about the attitude because this is a very volatile and important time over there. Within the Embassy you had Barbour who'd been there a long time and was considered a friend of Israel. You had the political officers, one you mentioned was David Korn who became very pro Israeli. But others, were there debates that there's another side to this and after all there's a bloody big Arab world out there and here we are supporting a relatively small country without any real strategic advantage to us? In geopolitics it doesn't make a real amount of sense to get overly involved here. Was this just a matter of debate? Or was this just—assume this was the way it was going to be and -you didn't have to talk about it?

CLUVERIUS: No, I think it was talked about. It wasn't talked about in any acrimonious sense because there was an environment in which our client, Israel, had beat the bejesus out of the Soviet's clients. As you recall, some years later that was very much a motivation on Kissinger's part. That there's no way that we're going to let US arms lose to Soviet arms. There was that kind of strategic element in it, the East-West element.

Q: Going back because things are changing so rapidly now, you did think of, Syria and Egypt as being Soviet clients more than...

CLUVERIUS: Sure, there was one of those treaties of friendship, etc. between Egypt and the Soviet Union and between the Soviets and Syria. This was 2 to 3 years before Sadat threw the Soviets out. Nasser was still president in Egypt. He died while I was there in Israel. So there was this view that there was this strategic element to this relationship. There was no real reason to jump on the Israelis for occupation policies which were really quite enlightened at that time, though it did not last long. The Settlements issue had not taken off yet.

Q: We're talking about putting Israeli settlers into the occupied areas.

CLUVERIUS: That issue was not started yet. That was started a bit in '68. I think it was, in Hebron. But the official Israeli line was that these were paramilitary settlements, called Nahals, subject to the orders of the Government and therefore not in violation of the Geneva Convention, as was being claimed by the Arabs and others. The United States protested to the Israelis about some of these settlements when they were converted to clearly civilian use. Perhaps if the US had made a bigger fuss the settlements might not have become the obstacle they are today. I guess the United States did not respond forcefully then, I think they should have, obviously should have. Probably one of those hundreds of occasions in which somebody in Washington said, “Oh now we can't jump on the Israelis on this because the plate is already too full of what we're trying to do,” something like that. A great mistake. Of course at that level in the Embassy I wasn't privy to the very close-hold circuit of peace making efforts. It may have been felt that maybe if the Arabs see that the Israelis are getting comfortable with this, maybe that will help bring them forward to cooperate in the peace process. It didn't of course, but that may have been an element.

Q: I want a little more of sort of the attitude that you had. One, was there any sort of frustration, going back to your previous subject, that no matter what happens, with every country we have disputes? Obviously with Israel we have policy problems, even at that time. That Israel would always prevail because it had influence back in Washington? That it almost wasn't worth trying to clash swords with Israelis from a diplomatic point of view? Because they could always bypass you through the Israeli lobby, and influence in the political process?

CLUVERIUS: That was certainly part of, shall we say, the diplomatic culture in the region. The views of the US Ambassador in Israel are going to carry more weight than the views of any other ambassador in the region. You had to keep your eye on the Lobby. But again some parts of that relationship were quite new. Until after '67, we had not been major arms

suppliers for Israel. The relationship really was much more between Jewish communities, so to speak, and Israel. We weren't the major suppliers of arms. We were hardly even a minor one really before '67. It was the French and the British for their own reasons. Obviously the British-French cooperation with Israel in '56. That kind of thing. So we had some policy differences with the Israelis. But when you discuss the Arab-Israeli problem, then you had doubts about the US course in this thing. Then you weren't talking about '67. You were talking about '48 still. Shouldn't the Palestinians be allowed to go back to their homes in Haifa, Tel Aviv, and places like that. Wasn't it wrong for the Israelis to expel so many Arabs in '48. -The Israeli mythology was not believed that all those Arabs fled voluntarily in '48. That kind of discussion went on. A historical, intellectual exercise. But we didn't have a lot to be upset with the Israelis about post '67. At least by the time I was there. We did by the time I left in '72. I had some good bosses there. Jack Button, recently deceased, was the Economic Counselor. I did quite a bit of political reporting on the territories since I was always out there along with the Consulate General, of course. But their reporting tone was a bit shrill in those days and that is always a danger for the consulate general in Jerusalem. They're so much on the cutting edge. I was later Consul General myself there. It's a very difficult place to report from. You deal with the Israelis and the Palestinians. You go to bed feeling schizophrenic every night. But from the Embassy point of view, there was nothing to get really excited about with the Israelis. We were waiting for the Arabs to respond to the reality of their defeat and try to get a peace process going. There was a thing called the Jarring Mission from the UN which was US supported. There was a lot of high level diplomacy going on, trying to gin up something. Assistant Secretary Joe Sisco was very active.

Q: Sort of moving on, you then came back to NEA, the Near Eastern Bureau. And you were the Deputy Director with what was the peace process...

CLUVERIUS: There was an office created I think in . . .

Q: This was from '72 to '76?

CLUVERIUS: That's right, I left Israel in July of '72. And there was a little dispute at the end of my tour. Since I covered the territories so much I wanted to wrap up my views and this was in 6 months or so before I left. So this would have been late '71 or something like that, maybe '72. I wrote a series of messages. Basically, arguing against the belief in Washington that Israel was still holding these, now 4 to 5 years after the war, was still holding these territories solely as a card to play. I argued that that was no longer quite the case. That there were certain parts of these territories that the Israelis probably would never agree to give up. They were becoming too comfortable with it. And that was controversial. The Ambassador did not want to send the messages.

Q: Still Barbour?

CLUVERIUS: Yes, still Barbour. I had a chat with him. I think we did have what is called a “dissent channel” at that time. I felt very strongly that the Washington view was very simply that Israel was prepared to trade all the territories for peace; that the Arabs were being jerks and not coming forward and challenging the Israelis at the negotiating table. I said it isn't quite that clear. Jerusalem aside, there were areas of the territories that I didn't think the Israelis would ever agree to give up. There was the coastal strip from Elat down to Sharm el Sheikh to assure the freedom of passage down the Strait of Tiran, parts of the West Bank, particularly the Latrun salient, and probably other parts. I concluded that under the best of circumstances, I thought the Israelis would insist in negotiations, again not including Jerusalem, on taking 25 to 40 percent of all the occupied territories, the Golan completely. I laid this all out on maps for what used to be called an airgram, which was mailed, not sent telegraphically. Airgrams did not have wide readership. Still my boss didn't want to send it. I told the DCM that I really felt strongly about it and had spent all that time tramping around out there seeing more Israelis than most people in the Embassy did and seeing Palestinians, of whom the Embassy was otherwise ignorant. I saw settlers, I saw the military occupation people, all of that. So I really felt I hadn't acquired all of this insight

not to have it recorded somehow. The DCM basically agreed with me, he said he would get it sent, and he did.

Q: So to get back to where you were, '72 to '76.

CLUVERIUS: I went back to be the Deputy Director of Israel and Arab-Israeli Affairs which had been created I think in '65 or '66.

Q: You sent this airgram which was a dissent but obviously based on personal experiences—did you find that this had any readership at all back in Washington?

CLUVERIUS: It did in NEA and INR but surely not on the seventh floor. At that time Hayward Stackhouse, known as Stack, who had been Political Counselor in Tel Aviv when I arrived there, was back as Director of the Office of Israel and Arab-Israel Affairs. And he offered me that job. But I didn't take it in '72. Actually, thinking back, I first went back and took a few months of academic sabbatical to try and finish my dissertation. I wasn't doing very well with that; I found that I wasn't really interested in it anymore. The Department said that if I really wanted to continue working on it after these few months off, if I don't finish it, we'll give you a job in INR, which was basically a 9 to 5 analyst job and I'd be able to finish this thing. Alternatively, they told me, if you finish in the time we're giving you or you don't want to finish it, there's a real hot job you can have which is Deputy Director of Israel and Arab-Israeli Affairs. I really had to decide, did I want a fast-track career. Obviously the Israeli Affairs office in NEA, that's all fast-track. Or did I want to finish the Ph.D. I decided I didn't give a damn anymore about the Ph.D. So I went to work in this office in the Spring of '73.

Q: What were you after? What does the office do?

CLUVERIUS: It runs like any desk, it's the bilateral desk of US-Israel relations. But in addition, the reason the name is so peculiar- Israel and Arab-Israeli Affairs- is that it was felt some years earlier, I think '65 or '66, that what was needed was one place to

coordinate what we did in the Arab-Israeli context. We needed one desk to be the focal point. If we're going to do something on Egypt we should know how it is going to affect the Arab-Israeli relationship. If we're going to do something on Israel, we've got to know what the impact on Jordan might be. So Arab-Israeli things in that context were in that office as well. I joined it in spring of '73. Stack was a tremendous officer, but he had decided to retire. His wife was tired of life overseas. He really let me do my own thing, so to speak. To write think-pieces and send them up to the Front Office. The Deputy Assistant Secretary to which we reported was Roy Atherton and we also worked with the Middle East guy at the NSC who was one of the most decent people and the finest analytical minds I ever met, Hal Saunders. The Assistant Secretary was Joe Sisco, one of the most effective guys at that level in Washington. Of course the routine of a normal desk was soon to change and we would be literally living in the office for months. We were going to have a war, the '73 war.

Q: This is the October '73...

CLUVERIUS: The Ramadan War on one side and the Yom Kippur War on the other. I was in kind of an unusual spot; I was able to draft a piece that gave proper expression to both Israeli and Arab points of view, how each side would see or react to some move we were considering. No one else in the Bureau at that time had worked both sides in the field and, as a journalism major, I think I wrote well.

Q: Here you are working on a sort of coordination, was this, looking back on it, was this being telegraphed, that this war was coming? Or did it really hit us by surprise?

CLUVERIUS: It took us by surprise, at least as far as I was aware. September-October is the time of year when traditionally Egypt and Syria had military maneuvers.

There were the usual preparatory signs of this in August, as I recall. Everybody was checking, watching but nobody was urgent about it because it was routine for the time of year. You ran the usual checks of intelligence sources and nothing far out of the ordinary

appeared. There was no human intelligence or communications intercepts or anything else to give a tip off. Most everybody believed that no one could really go to war anymore without something leaking out into the ether. Or some agent picking something up. It really was quite dead, quite. And of course, Israeli intelligence then had a much better, had almost a mythical reputation at the time. So if the Israelis didn't see anything urgent about these few little clues here and there, why the hell should we. Because they were believed to be damned near omniscient at that time. As it got very close to that very week, people did begin to get a bit jittery. Eban was in the United Nations in New York and so was Rodgers, I think, for the General Assembly. Kissinger was then National Security Advisor. By Wednesday or so, I'd planned to go to the Annapolis boat show on the Saturday, Stackhouse said, “I think I'd like you to be in here on the weekend. I've got something, I've got to give a speech or something, I've got to be away. But I think the way things are, I don't like it, I'd like you to be here on Saturday, but why don't you take Friday off and go to your boat show. “ So I did. And that Saturday, Stackhouse called me and said, “I'm not going and you'd better get in here, now” This is very early, 6:30 or 7:00 in the morning. “It looks like we're going to have a war.” But meanwhile, of course, as you read later, and I didn't know until I got down to the Department, that there would been desperate back-and-forthing for the previous 48 hours on the highest levels, they'd been checking intelligence sources. Something was cooking, Israel still thought it was maneuvers but they were getting very, very nervous. All this was going back and forth on the highest levels and I didn't see those cables normally anyway. I saw them when I got to the office that Saturday morning, by then the War had basically begun, and we set-up an operation task force on the 7th floor. I don't think I went home for 3 days. My wife brought me changes of underwear and things into the Department. So I was very much involved right then and there in the Arab Israeli peace process. And from Then until I retired in '88, with the exception of the two years I was Ambassador to Bahrain, that was my major activity.

Q: What was the feeling when the October war broke out in the Department? What were you experts dealing with? What did you think at the beginning and as it developed?

CLUVERIUS: At the very beginning I think it was just the basic assumption of everybody that the Israelis would repeat '67. However, they didn't do very well at first. And of course the Egyptian crossing of the Canal was a brilliant military stroke. There was no doubt about that. But it was still felt that, as they went across and moved into the Sinai, it was still felt that the Israelis would repeat '67. But of course Israel takes 24 hours or so to mobilize, 36 to really get into action and perhaps 72 hours to hit full stride. So the first couple of days the Arab successes were rather discounted. The Syrians almost broke through on the Golan. An Israeli General friend of mine later told me that the Syrian breakthrough would not have happened if the Israelis hadn't had to divert some critical pieces of armor and APC's to protect and evacuate settlers. So much for the argument that the settlers contributed to security; they're a detriment. The conventional wisdom was that the Israelis would turn it around very quickly, even though they suffered initial reverses. I guess the 3rd day or 4th day it became apparent that that wasn't going to be the case, that the Israelis were having severe trouble. One thing that developed early on and changed some doctrine in this country, I think, or so I've been told, was the rate of fire in modern war had gone up. The rate of fire was enormous. Stockpiles had disappeared much more quickly than anybody had predicted on the Israeli general staff side or probably on the Egyptian and Syrian sides as well. Of course, in the middle of all this, is the hand-holding of Hussein to keep him out of it. Basically telling him, look what happened to you last time when Nasser sucked you in. The American and British basically holding him back, which was probably easier to do since he hadn't been informed anyway. He had been cut out of this one by Asad and Sadat. But as it became apparent that the Israelis weren't going to turn it around, that it wasn't going to be over in 4 or 5 days or 6 as in 67, it became apparent to us by day 4 or 5 really, that the situation might create leverage. Of course it was Kissinger's genius to sense this quickly. And we were writing papers about it. Maybe we'd have a chance here, we would have no chance if there's a real victor and a real vanquished in either direction. And we had a number of different levers. One, no one was getting decisive advantage quickly. There was time to gear up a real diplomatic effort, there was time to be a little subtle here and there. That was one piece of leverage, that the

situation on the ground wasn't going to resolve itself so fast that we didn't have time to do something creative. The other piece of leverage was Israel's desperate need for supplies, particularly of ammunition. We were then working to set-up the re-supply flights through the Azores, all of our European friends not too happy with all of that. When the Israelis broke through across the Canal in the north, the Egyptian 3rd army then gradually became encircled in the south. Then we pressed very hard on the Israelis not to destroy the 3rd Army. By this time we were in probably the most collegial policy-making environments that I had ever seen or heard of in the Department. Because it was evolving so rapidly and unexpectedly, people were open to ideas. We would get together almost every morning during those early days.

Q: We didn't see this as—oh, I hope our guys win or their guys lose? We were seeing this as an opportunity?

CLUVERIUS: A possible opportunity, that's right. And we understood the Arab psychology much better than the Israelis ever did. We understood that if the Arabs took another drubbing as they did in '67, they'd close off as they did then. In other words, the lose of pride and face would be so severe that they couldn't face the process. But if they kept a little of their gains, pride wouldn't be so badly damaged, maybe there'll be enough room to maneuver. And so early on we were discussing this; every morning in those early days of the war, we'd have meetings with Joe Sisco. As Kissinger seized on all of this opportunity and began to formulate his own diplomatic strategy, then we didn't have such a collegial thing because he didn't need it anymore. We'd put up what ideas we had. I remember raising some hell one day because it was clear, from an intelligence report, that the Israelis were cutting off the water pipe to the 3rd army which was effectively encircled. It was already clear that if the 3rd army was to be encircled and destroyed, the leverage would be gone. So I raised hell to get somebody's attention to not let the Israelis salami slice this way. We had to keep them away from the 3rd army. We were writing memos that Sisco took seriously. Some of them translated into policy that Kissinger later pursued. Kissinger was extremely adept. The Israelis, usually their Ambassador, Simcha Dinitz, would yell at

him for delayed supplies and he would blame Schlesinger. It was quite a game that was starting to be played. But it then quickly became...

Q: Schlesinger being the Secretary of Defense.

CLUVERIUS: He could point at the Pentagon and say they were incompetent, dragging their feet. When in fact I suspect it was Henry Kissinger manipulating things. So it was quite an intriguing time. And I think very quickly, before the cease-fire was in place, I think Kissinger had the elements of his diplomacy in hand. And of course the Soviets were part of it. He had to deal with the Soviets. You will recall he made his first trip after the war. He started in Moscow basically to see if he had anything to work with there. The Soviets had done some saber-rattling in support of the Arabs, even sending some “advisors” or what have you to Egypt. There was that great dispute about the October 22nd line, that the Israelis had violated the cease-fire lines. Everybody had to go back to the October 22nd lines. At that point I was writing papers for Roy Atherton and Hal Saunders; I was probably the only munchkin, so to speak, in the bureau at the time who had served in both in Israeli and the Arab world. I could write a paper that fairly reflected both interests and likely reactions on both sides to one or another possible move by the US.

Q: Trying to get somewhat the feel. If somebody had served only in Israel, within sort of departmental mentality or something, almost tainted that person. Or if somebody had only served in the Arab world...

CLUVERIUS: In that environment it wasn't a matter of being tainted; it was what your mind-set was as a result of being steeped in the views of one side but ignorant of what motivated the other side. It wasn't a matter of being tainted. It was also, I must say, a matter of drafting-skill. If you were steeped in the Israeli point of view or the Arab and wrote the paper, someone with expertise on the other side would have to go over it and put the balance in. And I'd done journalism school, and I was a pretty good writer. I could write it so that no one else would have to make an input for balance before it went to the

front office and on to the seventh floor. It would save Roy a lot of time. But increasingly as the cease-fire took hold and diplomacy really began, the famous shuttle-period, the lower levels were increasingly closed off from access. Because you didn't need to know, fair enough. And obviously, Kissinger is a secretive guy and a firm believer that the fewer people that know what's going on the more likely you have a chance for success. And he's right. And we had plenty to do. So for a while there I was kind of out of it. Although I still did quite a bit for Roy. Kissinger being so secretive, I guess he really believed that all the papers which showed Roy or Hal Saunders as drafting, were really written by these guys. But obviously they had so much to do they couldn't do it all. They had other responsibilities. So I wrote a lot of things for those guys. But as it all went into higher gear, there was less and less of that kind of thing to do since it had been done. He had decided what he was going to do, how he was going to do it and at that point didn't need a lot more input from the munchkins, just needed to get on with it. But at some point, I can't remember exactly when, it may have been in early '74, after the shuttle period had started, one day by accident I saw a paper that I wasn't suppose to see. It had a lot in it about how to approach the substance of the issue like Israeli withdrawal and moves toward real peace. All the big issues. And I'd seen this paper and I told the boss, Stackhouse, that I'd seen it and I totally disagreed with it. But I said, so how am I supposed to have seen it'? It's one of these, Eyes Only - Kissinger kind of things. So he said, “I'll talk to Roy.” And he talked to Roy and said, “You know, Wat by mistake saw this paper and he thinks you guys are going at it wrong. “ So Roy kind of laughed, according to Stack, and said he can read the paper and he can write what he doesn't like about it. What I didn't like about it, and this is from my Israeli experience, is that it was very mechanical. We'll go to DMZ'S, gradual withdrawals, troop and armament limitations here and a zone there. All in my own view very mechanical. I had a feeling that the Israelis were not going to give up territory gained for mechanical arrangements which were military almost completely military—demilitarize this, limited force zone that. So I wrote a paper back to Roy. I said, what you're missing here is the psychology of Israel. This is all mechanical, all military, and the Israelis aren't going to give you anything, give the Arabs anything except in exchange for what I think

I called “elements of normalization, “ They not only would not give up the territory, they would also have to know what is going to happen to it. They have to see some signs of being accepted as a people, as a country. If you don't get normalization in there, you aren't going to make this thing work. I wrote up quite a lot of stuff about kinds of things I thought would impress the Israelis over and above the purely mechanical military zones of this and that kind. Roy sent the paper over to Hal Saunders who was still at the NSC, who had not yet come over to the Department as he did later. So one Saturday morning, Hal came over with the briefing book on Egypt Israeli negotiations and he said, “Well, you know, if you don't like the way we're doing it then why don't you rewrite the book. “ And I just sat down and started working. And that was really the beginning of my deep substantive involvement in the Arab-Israeli peace process. Which I continued. I never went on any of the shuttles with Kissinger but I worked and prepared every one of them. Hal and Roy always went, other people as well. But these were the main substantive guys, no doubt about that. And so I continued working in that sense through the Kissinger period, through the '75-'76 period. I was thrown out of Kissinger's office, by my count, I think it was 18 or 19 times, before I was allowed to stay. Because we had a new Director of the office who was going through a very difficult personal time, and was hardly ever there, I ran the office. So every time an Israeli leader came in, if you look back at the newspapers it was damn near weekly it seemed, like Dayan, I was the one who had the responsibility as the Desk guy to meet them at the door and, very often, in the basement actually, without publicity. I would take them up to the Secretary's office, take them into the meeting, and I would join the meeting and then Jerry Bremer, Peter Rodman or Larry Eagleburger would look at me, look at Kissinger, Kissinger would look at me, Jerry or Peter would come over and quietly ask me to leave.

Q: Kissinger by that time was Secretary of State.

CLUVERIUS: Yes, by this time he's Secretary. Interesting that all of this post-war period I think and remember only Kissinger as the mover and shaker, not the Secretary of State in office at the beginning of that period. And I would get thrown out and Roy would say

you've got to keep going in to the meetings because it is proper that you be there. But I was getting thrown out frequently until finally one day Kissinger looked at me and said, “Hello Wat. “ Or something like that; he finally recognized me. But it was just his own style, the fewer people the better. I don't disagree with that. But it was a little bit damaging for my relations with the Israeli embassy for quite a time. So, finally, I stayed in most of the larger meetings until I went abroad in the Fall of '76.

Q: In this time, could you talk about the Israeli lobby because this is such a creature you might say of American politics. And I'd like to get an impression of how this worry on your operations in the period you were doing this.

CLUVERIUS: The lobby didn't care much care at all about the Desk or any of the NEA worker bees. Their targets, their sights were always much higher: The Secretary of State, the White House, Capitol Hill. Of course it was, and is, a very powerful lobby. Certainly the most powerful foreign affairs lobby. It ranks with the National Rifle Association and the Dairy lobby, certainly in the top 5 or 10 issue lobbies. Everybody was well aware that you had this other constituency when dealing with the Arab-Israeli problem, dealing with Israel. You had an enormous domestic constituency looking over your shoulder, trying to push you this way and that. In the post-war period there was increasingly a knee-jerk approval situation on Capitol Hill. Almost anything that they would circulate would get signed by more than 70 senators and 300 or 400 hundred representatives. They were riding very high. And of course the Arabs were seeing us as bad guys, and vice versa in many quarters. Israel started the '67 war in a technical sense— they preempted rather than wait for the expected attack-everybody understood that Nasser sort of bungled into that one. But in the '73 war Israel was attacked by surprise and that doesn't go well with Americans. We still had our memories of Pearl Harbor. So the support for Israel was very high, the lobby riding high, being listened to.

Q: As you saw it, did you find the lobby made much of a difference in how we were going about the peace process?

CLUVERIUS: Right then not a heck of a lot in my mind. Right then, '73 right after the war '74, no I don't think so. Because we quickly got to a process which held promise of actually moving beyond simple cease-fire toward settling the conflict. There were the Kilometer 101 talks under UN auspices and Kissinger-led diplomacy. A disengagement agreement between Israel and Egypt was in the works, even got something later on started with the Syrians. We might have gotten something started with Jordan. It was probably a mistake not to have tried with Jordan in the summer of '74 or later, in '75. But that had a lot to do with Sadat too. We'd done one with Egypt if you recall. Then there was the Golan agreement in mid-74. The famous 33 day shuttle for the Golan agreement. Then the logical thing would have been—even though Jordan didn't get into the '73 war— to attack the results of the '67 war and bring Jordan in to set the precedent that withdrawal and arrangements have to he made on all 3 fronts. I think Sadat sabotaged that, the Israelis were definitely not interested and I don't think Kissinger was at all anxious to do it. The West Bank and Jerusalem set up a whole different set of issues than either the Sinai or the Golan in terms of emotions and history. Not to mention in terms of population. So I don't think Kissinger was anxious to tackle that can of worms. If Sadat didn't press it, why should he, I suppose that's how it came out. There were some of us who argued very hard and I worked very hard in creating possibilities, briefing papers, and options books. What it might look like on the ground. How you might structure a Jordan-Israeli negotiation. But basically Sadat wanted to go back and do something even bigger with the Israelis. It was done. Sinai II for which we paid an enormous financial price. By this time of course we have (Sinai 11, yes '75, September '75) Henry as Secretary of State, Ford is President coming up to '76, elections. We paid a very high price for Sinai 11 particularly the language on not talking to the PLO. Which if you look back at the Congressional record, it was not meant. And of course in between we had those 2 Geneva summits and all that nonsense. We launched those negotiations obviously with the Soviets in Geneva and never reconvened the Geneva conference. But it's never been adjourned either, by the way. That's a technical and legal historical point. Anyway, the language on the PLO. It says we will not recognize or negotiate with any other party except in consultation with

Israel or something like that. It didn't say 1. not deal with" and that was very carefully drafted. I think you probably have that on record, maybe from Roy Atherton because I think he drafted it with the Israelis. It was a negotiated statement with the Israelis. They knew what it meant and what it didn't mean. It did not mean "not talk to them. " It said "not recognize or negotiate with. " They were afraid we would negotiate issues of substance behind their back with a party they couldn't deal with—the Palestinians. But later it just got expanded into a "not talking to" by Congressional pressure and Carter's problems later on. But we didn't do it with Jordan, did the second one in '75 with Egypt after that very difficult period of getting the one with the Syrians. Including the arms embargo against the Israelis in the spring of '75 because they balked at the Sinai II agreement badly and it was aborted and had to be picked up again in the summer. But it was a fascinating period. You had a lot of differences on substance with the Israelis that didn't surface because we weren't getting at the tough substance. We were still in the disengagement kind of thing. We weren't addressing some of the tough issues like the West Bank, certainly not Jerusalem. So, Kissinger got outraged with the Israelis during the early efforts at the Sinai II G agreement. And held up arms shipments and things like that. Put some real pressure on. Nevertheless we were still going down a road with both sides, with this very fantastic Sadat-Kissinger relationship and the Israelis. Things were moving, there were stops, fits and starts. And our differences on substance with the Israelis, we didn't really get into it that much, We weren't getting to that kind of substance where things were going to be really nasty.

Q: Had Begin come in at that point?

CLUVERIUS: No. Begin came in the spring of '77.

Q: We'll come to him later. But you felt you had an Israeli government that was middle of the road, somewhat responsive. And also Sadat became sort of a surprise, didn't it. That he was considered at first sort of a minor, ineffectual character.

CLUVERIUS: That's because he had been Deputy Pharaoh. You never know how Pharaoh is going to be until he's actually Pharaoh. There's no doubt that Kissinger found on his first trip, after the war, his first swing to Moscow, Tel Aviv, Cairo (I forget how it went.) That here was a guy that was willing to negotiate with Israel without having an outcome guaranteed in advance. He didn't say: I'll talk to them but I have to be guaranteed now that I'll get all my territory back. Which had always been the Arab line. And here was a guy much more open to the subtleties of negotiation. And instantly, I think, Kissinger realized here's a guy he could really work with. Because the newspapers were full of the Israeli violations of the October 22 lines and the Soviets were rattling sabers—Israel must go back to the October 22 lines. And here's Sadat looking at Kissinger and saying to hell with the October 22 lines, I want something bigger with Israel. That's basically what happened. And so Kissinger came back knowing he had leverage, that here was an Arab willing to deal without guarantees in advance about the outcome. And a man with a very creative mind about these issues. And a government on the other side which however traumatized by their failure in '73, and this is the time, to recall now, when people were throwing tomatoes at Moshe Dayan, Minister of Defense, because he should have seen it coming. There was a lot of turmoil. This was the beginning of the downfall of the Labor Party, basically. But still a government willing to look at anything, willing to try to move forward, though it didn't want to deal with Jerusalem or the West Bank. But neither did Sadat, neither did Kissinger. So they could focus on Sinai and the Golan, which was very painful in any case. But something was done. So all of this sort of goes into a kind of limbo after September '75, as these things do when you approach an election year. And certainly in our traumatized society in '75-'76, a President resigning just ahead of impeachment, the pardon and all of that. By this time I was pretty exhausted; actually I think most of us were. Those were 7 day weeks and 14-15 hour days and they kept going. There wasn't a spurt that lasted a couple of months, it was years of this kind of thing. And so I went looking around for a job outside of NEA. I thought that would be a good idea. I went around to other bureaus and talked to people. NEA was prepared to take care of me, there was no doubt about that. By this time Roy Atherton was Assistant Secretary, Joe Sisco had moved

up to Under Secretary, Hal Saunders was in the Department as Deputy Assistant. So I went looking around. My tour had been much longer than normal. In fact at one point, it was early '74, Hermann Eilts wanted me to come out as he'd reopened the Embassy in Cairo. And Roy said, you can go, but I really need you here. So I stayed. NEA was clearly willing to take care of me but I'd really thought I'd like to do something else and get away from these pressures. Also, it was clear that for a year or so it would get difficult to get the process started again, disengagement had gone as far as it was going to go. You were going to have to touch tough issues, and I felt I needed a break. In fact, I couldn't find that quality of job outside of NEA, that NEA would give me. I was looking for a DCM job in a medium size post in Africa or a small European post or something like that. We had what was called the “Global Outlook Program.” You were suppose to go around and sprinkle your careers with experiences outside your main interest, your main career line. So I went in to Roy Atherton one day and said, “Roy, the kind of job you are giving to people from other bureaus coming to us,, their bureaus are not giving to us.” And I laid it down for him. And he said, “You're right, it's not equitable, so what do you want to do in NEA?” And I looked around and I said, “Look, Joe Twinam is about due to come out to Bahrain, I'd like to be Ambassador to Bahrain.” He looked at me and he said you're right. Kissinger had agreed that we could use these new posts, which were relatively recent, in Bahrain, Qatar and the UAE.

Q: In my time when I was vice-consul in Dhahran, we covered everything—Bahrain, Qatar...

CLUVERIUS: They had decided that they would use these posts to give what was then an FSO-3 which is now an FSO-1, I guess, a chance. I had just been promoted to 3. I said, okay, let's see if the boss will buy that. And Kissinger bought it. I guess by that time lie knew more or less who I was and knew I'd contributed, etc. And so in the fall of '76 I went to Bahrain as Ambassador which was an awfully good shot in the arm for my career. I had been in the foreign service less than 10 years and although I'd started the foreign service

late, at 32, I was Ambassador at 41. Which is relatively young. And I had a marvelous time in Bahrain.

Q: What were our interests in Bahrain, American interests?

CLUVERIUS: Well of course Bahrain had been the home base, so to speak, of a small US navy presence in the Gulf since right after WW II. And it had been also one of Britain's major outposts east of Suez which they had given up when they began pulling back their foreign roles east of Suez. I can't really tell you off the top of my head when the British left Bahrain. They had had a senior array of generals there and they had a senior British admiral. At any rate the US interest was very much —Middle East force it's called— a home port for a mother ship and 2 or 3 destroyers on a rotating basis. And in the heat of emotion in '73, the Bahrainis had publicly said that the Americans would have to leave in '77 when the treaty or the present lease ran out. The navy and US government wanted very much for the navy to stay. I think basically the Bahrainis did, too, because their anger in the '73 war was really very much a repeat of their anger in '67 that the American ally, Israel, was about to roll over the Arabs. But they saw what was happening. There was a test of arms there and the Egyptians did pretty well and so did the Syrians. And in fact the Arab world saw some of that as a victory. The Egyptians and Sadat sold it to the Egyptians and the Arab world as a victory. And the Americans were playing a major role in moving the Israelis back. We'd had 3 disengagement agreements. There was promise of more. So the Bahrainis realized they'd shot their mouths off in the heat of the moment, and would like us to stay but they had the problem of their own PR. To keep the Americans around was still not a popular thing in the Gulf. The Kuwaitis would have paid a substantial fortune to the Bahrainis just to get the Americans out. The Kuwaitis were very much afraid that our relationship would contaminate them. They were afraid of the Iraqis at that time and doing a clumsy job of balancing their fear of Iraq with a little anti-Americanism. But the Bahrainis themselves wanted us to stay. So that was really my job, to go out there and re-negotiate

the agreement so that we could keep our force there. That is what I did from the fall of '76, finally signing an agreement in the summer of '77.

Q: Well how did you go through this, you might say, almost face-saving operation or something; circumstances had changed?

CLUVERIUS: You had to find a way to save the Bahraini face so they could continue to have our presence. Which included a Department of Defense school which the Bahrainis cherished. A very good Department of Defense school which a lot of their kids went to, the establishment's kids went to. The ones who didn't were sent of to Switzerland or somewhere. That was an element. Yes, we had to find a way to save face, keep our presence, but give the Bahrainis something that they could say—this is different. I had a very interesting Admiral there at the time, Bill Crowe.

Q: When I was Consul-General in Naples, he was CINCSOUTH. Probably the most astute, politically astute Admiral we've ever had.

CLUVERIUS: We became very close friends. He was my daughter's commencement speaker at her college last week, at her request. So Bill and I sat down, he was there before me, he said—how do you want to do this? And I said, well I've had my first meetings with the Emir and his Cabinet. I know something about the Arab world. And since we're talking here about “face” and so on, I want to do this one-on-one. I don't want you present. I want to do all the negotiating. We'll meet before I go in, we'll meet after I come out, but I want to do it one-on-one. Bill Crowe kind of rolled his eyes, and said—the navy will be really upset at that approach. This was a time when the Admiral and the head of the oil company, Caltex, had more influence in Bahrain than the Ambassador because oil and Navy had been there a long time and I was just the second US Ambassador. I said, I understand that but I really think I can do it and do it better this way. It'll be totally coordinated and obviously you'll have to tell me what elements of this thing you can change. And he said, ah, that's the right idea. And I said, what do you mean? He said,

“Well, your predecessor (I had seen this reading into the job) and mine both believed we either keep it all or lost it all. And I said, that's right, Joe did report that way. And I said, I don't believe that, do you? And he said, “No.” So we very quickly established a relationship. He said—I'll keep the navy off your back the best I can. And I said, okay. It was his idea to sit down and break down what Middle East Force did, what it had in Bahrain, what it needed in Bahrain, in kind of a functional way. And then I could then work through all of this with the foreign minister. Explaining what we had, what we needed to have in the future, what we wanted to keep, what we could let go, and it just took a while to understand each other. There was money involved but not much and I refused to mention it because I knew the Arab radicals would pay 10 times whatever it was we would pay for dock space, so to speak, to get us out of there. So I left money alone and Bill Crowe protected my flanks. We became so close that we did what the military and the diplomat in the field can do if they're working together. Which is get their own way and do it their way and do it right. Because I would get these little cables that would say—this may be of interest to you but you might not wish to share this with Commander Middle East Force at this time. Or he would get a cable that said—We really think you ought to take a hand in these negotiations and maybe you should go call on Sheik so-and-so and probably not tell the Ambassador that you have this task. And every time he got one and every time I got one we'd just call each other up and say-hey, Bill, could you come over, I've got another one of these cables. And he would do the same thing.

And so about half way through this operation with Bill Crowe, he was replaced and came back to Washington for a job I don't recall. But it was a wonderful relationship. We stayed good friends ever since. And that was really my assignment. Then of course, Jimmy Carter got elected in '76.

Q: Well, '76, he came in '79, I mean '77.

CLUVERIUS: He came in '77. Cyrus Vance had a Chief of Missions meeting in Riyadh and I went over—by dhow—and all the regional guys went over. I just needed to have the new

administration confirm the line I was on with the Bahrainis on this base-rights thing; did the Democrats want the damn base. Anyhow that was confirmed so we proceeded along the way that Bill and I had laid out and signed the agreement in July of '77. Now at that point as things settled down in the new administration, I got a letter from Hal Saunders saying that it's been confirmed that you will stay the full assignment. Which would be another year or a little more than a year. They didn't have the so-called 3 year rule then, that came in only recently but three years was what was felt to be a useful tour in the Gulf. After a while the issues were pretty repetitive down there and life is pretty confining. Although I really enjoyed Manama, it was fine with me and I went out and spent a bunch of money on a big vacation with the family in the Seychelles. And enjoyed that after signing the treaty. Therefore, I planned to stay until '79 but then in the late spring of '78 Carter was trying to get things going in the peace process. Begin had gotten elected in Spring of '77 and all of that. Didn't look like anything was going anywhere with the Likud. Carter trying to find his way and being quite sympathetic, really, on the Arab side. Having quite a good intellectual understanding of the issues. So in '78 we were going to go home for home leave in the summer, and come back for another year plus.

Q: '78

CLUVERIUS: But then I was told on the telephone that I would not he coming back for the last year. That they wanted me to get back into the peace process and they would find the platform for me to do that. Which was to be Director of the office that handles Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, NEA, ARN. With that the real game for me was to get back into the peace process as this new president was really anxious to get it

[Missing Text]

CLUVERIUS: prepare the United States to conduct the West Bank-Gaza-Palestinian-Jordanian complex of issues. And that's what I started doing as well as trying to run the office. I had very good people in there so it largely ran itself. I later gave up that particular

podium. So I spent those months between Camp David, September '78 and the signing of the treaty in March '79, preparing our files, working with the intelligence agencies, tasking all kinds of people for all kinds of studies as to how we could attack this Palestinian-West Bank-Gaza set of issues that we're to tackle as soon as the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty was signed and on its way to implementation. That treaty was signed in March '79. Robert Strauss was named to be the Special Envoy to carry on after that, and so we began. I think we began in April, May, I forget which, maybe May of '79 in Tel Aviv and in Alexandria to start dealing with the other half of Camp David. And of course very quickly running into serious difficulty. As soon as Begin got back with the treaty, his own party voted against him in the Knesset. Many of them did. They thought he had given away much too much. They felt that the total withdrawal from the Sinai and the dismantling of the Israeli settlements, was going much too far even to achieve the major strategic goal of getting Egypt out of the war with Israel. So he realized then that he did not intend to deal imaginatively on the West Bank issue. In fact, I think that in Begin's mind, and of course I later spent quite a bit of time with him, with the special negotiators and all, that in his mind really the Egyptian-Israeli treaty had bought him off the hook for West Bank. He really believed, I think, that Sadat, obviously not agreeing or saying anything about it, he really believed that Sadat cared about Egypt and to hell with the Palestinians. And that he not only had bought the strategic advantage of getting Egypt out of the coalition for war in the Arab world, but he'd also bought Egyptian acquiescence in the Israeli retention of the West Bank. And maybe Sadat let him believe that so he, Sadat, could get what he wanted first. Which was first and foremost the Sinai. Of course, Begin was much too simplistic if he believed that Sadat or anybody else would swallow the fact that one treaty obviated the necessity for a further peace process. But I think he did believe it.

Q: What was your impression, in your dealings with Begin, of Begin—how he looked on things, how he dealt on things?

CLUVERIUS: A very difficult guy, tending to lecture, very legalistic in his outlook.His ideology of course was clear—basic revisionist Zionism. The Likud of course being

a coalition itself. He was a Likud founder. The important thing about him I guess in a sense, was that when he gave his word, he kept it. He didn't try to slide around what he believed to be his commitments. If you nailed him down good he kept his word. He was a strictly honest kind of guy in that sense. Very difficult to deal with, he did tend to lecture, very prickly, and I think most of the special negotiators, most of those of us who worked with him, became tired of Mr. Begin's lectures—you either got the 17-minute lecture on Jerusalem, the 27-minute lecture on Jerusalem or whatever. But you've got to understand what kind of a man he was—an ideologue, a man of the underground. I think that mentality never changed. In fact one western ambassador told me once that he had to call on Begin at his home. He did so in the early evening and the butlers made a mistake, there's a little foyer in the Prime Minister's residence where people can be comfortably held while someone goes and tells the Prime Minister that his guest is there. But the butler was new or something and let this ambassador right into the living room where you could see right into the study at the other end of the living room, it's not a very big house. And he said what was going on was Begin and 4 of his old underground companions, none of whom was in government anymore, sitting on the floor of the library of his study singing the old underground songs of this stern gang or whatever. So a man of the underground mentality. But there was a core of honesty and integrity there once you understood what its limits were, so to speak, his ideology. That's probably what was crushed by the Lebanon war. He had been misled by Sharon.

Q: That comes a little later doesn't it.

CLUVERIUS: That does indeed come a little later.

Q: Well now, on this peace process, you were sort of given the West Bank peace process, I'm talking to you in May in 1990, it just seems to have gotten worse and worse. I mean did you have the feeling that okay this is it, we've got to be working on it but it's not going anywhere?

CLUVERIUS: At first you say, let's go back to '79, the Egyptian-Israeli treaty had been signed and if you recall the atmosphere in the Arab world, that Camp David was a huge mistake for Sadat. And everybody was up in arms against him. But there was still a hope in the Arab world that this process wouldn't go forward, it would collapse, Sadat would never sign a treaty with the Israelis. In fact, if you recall, I think I'm correct here, the Arabs broke with Sadat and they ostracized Egypt and pulled the Arab league out. That didn't happen as a result of Camp David, it was a result of the signing of the treaty in March of '79. At the same time on the Israeli side, the right wing really hoped that thing wouldn't be signed either, particularly the settlers movement, the Gush Emunim, which means the block of faithful which are to the right of Likud.

Q: This is a very right wing.

CLUVERIUS: These are the guys who basically had to be physically removed from north Sinai in the area called Yammit as part of the peace. The settlers there were bought off by the government. They all got very nice compensation, most of them took the money and ran. And then their houses were filled up by these nuts from the West Bank, the block of faithful, the Gush. And those are the ones who had to be removed by force, there were threats of suicide and all of that. Of course Sharon, who agreed with them, was the Defense Minister and had to do it. But the mood after the signing of the treaty in Israel among the settlers was one of great gloom. My god, here is the precedent for the West Bank. We've given it all back, every inch of the Sinai. And here comes these negotiations we have to take part in. So there was a lot of gloom on the side of those who didn't want to give anything back and a great deal of elation on the side of those who really wanted the peace process to go forward and knew you had to give land back to get to another peace treaty. The US approach was to use a senior confidante of the president, which was Robert Strauss in the beginning. He started it, he started in Alex, in Tel Aviv, that was because the Egyptians would not negotiate in Jerusalem. Sadat had gone once to Jerusalem and that was going to be it. He would not negotiate in Jerusalem.

And therefore the Israelis would not negotiate in Cairo. So we ended up in Tel Aviv and in Alexandria. Alexandria had no decent hotels then. The best one was called the Palestine, but of course the Israelis would not stay in because of the name and the history. It was built by the Soviets, soviet money, to be the site of the founding of the PLO. And the only other one was a dump called the San Stefano which was just awful. So one of Strauss's contributions to the subsequent negotiations was to tell the Israelis—forget it.

[INTERRUPTION]

CLUVERIUS: So Strauss persuaded the Israelis that no way was he going to go back to the San Stefano hotel. We had to find some other answer - So the Israelis went along with a face-saving device, we would negotiate in Giza. Not in Cairo but in Giza, so we did the Mena House which was right next to the pyramids which was marvelous. A good place to negotiate. We stayed there, I must have slept in that hotel 6 months of my life in various times. There was some seriousness of purpose here. Carter was willing to push it. Sadat obviously was willing to push it. He knew he couldn't have just one treaty in the Arab world and Egypt ostracized. But also of course he wasn't going to push those negotiations so hard, trying to ram difficult things down the Israeli throat, that it would disrupt the timetable for the completion of the bilateral treaty. Obviously he had a vested interest in quickly getting back his oil fields in the Gulf of Suez. Getting the Israelis out of Sinai. That timetable didn't run out until '82, Spring of '82. He had 3 years basically to complete the arrangements of the treaty. So the Egyptians were not pressing it terribly hard that they would disrupt other important items. Carter wasn't prepared to push tough issues very hard because he was facing reelection. He was obviously going to have a difficult time of it. If you will recall, in fact from the United States point of view, I believe that the chance to really push that, if the Americans wanted to, disappeared in, really disappeared in the Fall of '79 when Ted Kennedy declared that he was going to challenge Carter for the Democratic nomination. Carter pulled Strauss out of the Middle East negotiations to run his campaign and assigned Sol Linowitz who is the most distinguished, the most marvelous gentleman with whom I've ever worked. Sol is a man of tremendous character,

integrity, just about an old school gentleman. So, Sol took over, clearly with a mandate that if I had to put it in shorthand from the president was—Sol push this as hard as you can but don't you push anything so hard that gets in the way of the campaign. This is going to be a tough fight. What we were doing was really trying to clear the underbrush, deliberately really, avoiding the tough issues. Occasionally the Egyptian negotiators would try to get into the tough issues in a very hard way. But in fact, they didn't have the support of Sadat for that really. So we would say, to the Egyptians, come on back it off. And if we had to say it at the higher level then they were backed off.

Q: So really, everybody, was working seriously but on one hand there are strings on them or something. It sounds like nobody really wanted to really get together on things.

CLUVERIUS: Well, we were engaged and we had lots of difficult arguments. What was being done was clearing the underbrush. Yes, there wasn't a rush to the tough issues like Jerusalem, things like that. We did, in the files, if we ever get to it again, the files are there really, we did clear up some basics, like what does “autonomy” mean. If you recall the word “autonomy,” what does it mean and how do we do it. How would you conduct elections. What would be allowed, what wouldn't be allowed-we had lots of that. So there was a lot of very useful underbrush clearing. In fact, tons of it really, on what it would look like. Sol, if you recall, told the President when he left the job after Carter lost the elections, that 80% of the issues had been resolved. That was his public report to the President and his private report was a little bit more honest, shall we say. But it was a fair thing to say in this sense: That 80% were resolved and each party could probably agree to that. The problem was the remaining 20% were the toughest issues. Those 20% could probably only be resolved if you know, the Egyptians would say—yes I'll stick with this 80% we agreed on provided the other 20% goes my way 100% and the Israelis would probably have said the same kind of thing. But there was a lot of useful work done and we carried it on. I left the NEA job basically and became Sol's political advisor full time in January of '80. We

stoically carried on doing this kind of thing during the election campaign. Obviously then a new team comes in. So there was a kind of a stand-down with the new group.

[INTERRUPTION]

CLUVERIUS: So we did all of this 80% so to speak, on Sol Linowitz's terms. And obviously of course it ended when the Carter administration lost the '80 election. Of course we still had our office. Sol left, those of us who were foreign service officers on the team, which was mostly all of us, there were only about 7 or 8, we just kind of waited to see what was going to happen. Who was going to be the new NEA Assistant Secretary, what jobs were we going to get, what we wanted to do, we were talking to the Personnel system—we were told we should stay together as a group. Because the new administration might want a group negotiating effort. And of course in a sense they did, structured a little bit differently. So at the end of the Carter administration, we had a real achievement. We had an Egyptian-Israeli treaty which was being implemented on schedule. We had done an awful lot of the clearing of the underbrush for a serious negotiation over the toughest issues—the West Bank and Jerusalem. So there was something handed to the incoming Reagan administration.

Q: Can you sort of compare the negotiating style of the Israelis and the Egyptians?

CLUVERIUS: The Israelis, very simply, the Israelis always being a coalition government, even if one party is in power, there are coalitions between the various wings and all of that. So they're all represented. If we ever get back to this some other time too there's lots of interesting vignettes of those negotiations. The Israelis always fighting amongst themselves, having had 97 clearances on even the most minor position. Egyptians being enormously patient, enormously patient. Which they are as a people and enormously patient and very able negotiators. Quite willing to suffer all kinds of distractions, let the Israelis run off with this irrelevance or that irrelevance, and very patiently bringing it right back to the issue they wanted to discuss and the one they feel is the core of the thing. The

Israelis are a volatile and mercurial people. The Egyptians are a very patient, very polite, very gentle people. And that's their negotiating style.

Q: Today is November 13, 1991. This is a continuation of an interview with Ambassador Cluverius. We listened to a portion of the tape before and of course it's been quite a hiatus. You were talking about the Carter administration when Strauss left. Why did Strauss leave and how do you summarize how our negotiating position worked out at that point.

CLUVERIUS: Strauss was not in the job very long. Early on, Roy Atherton moved up from Assistant Secretary to be the Special Negotiator. But he was really positioning us during that period when they were negotiating the actual treaty which is the end of '78, early '79. Of course it was finished in March '79. And Roy was really overseeing those negotiations and getting us ready for the other half of Camp David, which is the Palestinian half. There were really two groups. One team was really concentrating on getting the treaty which was supposed to have been done 3 months after Camp David. But in tact wasn't done until March '79. A couple of times it almost derailed. But there was another group at the working level and that was what I was in charge of. To try to get us ready for the other half of Camp David. Making the assumption that the treaty would have been successfully concluded and then we would have moved quickly on. So very quickly after the signing of the treaty, we were positioned to go forward and had a lot of files built up, done some thinking and writing about how we would negotiate and implement the other half of Camp David. That was when Strauss was named in the Spring, end of March-April of '79. Of course he only stayed until September-October of '79. His attitude was an interesting one. He had no expertise, it was pretty clear he didn't plan on acquiring any. He had an office in the State Department which he would not set foot in. He considered himself co-equal on this issue with the Secretary of State, Mr. Vance. Of course, Muskie came along, you're better at putting that in the record than I am of exactly when Vance's resignation was. That was the Spring, I guess of '80. Then what', his name from Maine came in-Muskie, of course.

Q: Muskie came in May of 1980.

CLUVERIUS: So those early months Vance was still there we went over to see Strauss in his trade negotiating office which was basically where he worked out of. His view towards this was basically Texas politics. Three or 4 of up, went over—Hal Saunders, myself, Ned Walker—Ned ended up being kind of Executive Assistant to Strauss. He got that job not because he was from NEA, because Strauss didn't want anybody from NEA. In fact, he was offered as a kind of Staff Aide kind of level, Nat Howell, who is now Ambassador to Kuwait. But he didn't want anybody recommended by the Department. It just happened that somebody outside of the Middle East business who knew Ned Walker, recommended Ned. So he took Ned. Which was fine with the Bureau. Ned, me and of course Hal Saunders who was Assistant Secretary at the time, we got into Strauss's office and he said, now we talk about the various issues. We gave him some briefing material and all of that. He said, well now when I make my first trip why don't I just put my arms around Mr. Begin, put my arm around his shoulder, walk off with him in the corner and say to him-.-now look, I'm the President's new envoy, I know you want me to start well and you want this thing to succeed, why don't you just stop all this settlement business as kind of a gift to me as the new man. This indicated a great deal of understanding about where Mr. Begin was coming from! Hal kind of hemmed and hawed and said—Mr. Ambassador that's one approach but I think you'll find that Mr. Begin's ideology is so wrapped up in this that he's not going to approach it in this give-and-take political fashion. But Strauss never did a lot of homework. He did approach it as a domestic political kind of thing. You scratch my back, I'll find a way to scratch yours, and let's move on. Substance didn't seem to interest him very much. He was Master and of course the press was following us at that time. The treaty had been successfully completed at Camp David. The aura of a peace in the Middle East was very strong. So we had traveling press those early trips with Strauss. And Strauss was marvelous with the press, he really was. Obviously he was a superb politician. He may not have the skills that translated abroad very well perhaps, at least not at this. Of course in the trade negotiations he had clout. He had the American market, he had things he could offer. Here of course it's all moral suasion and he didn't have any real clout. In fact, the opposite, he was working for a President who was obviously

going to face a tough reelection campaign. But he was marvelous with the press, he said some wonderful things. Once he said—we had a particularly difficult morning, we were in Alexandria where we started, the Egyptians would not negotiate in Jerusalem. The exact question is on the agenda. The Israelis said—we won't negotiate in Cairo. If you won't come to our capital, we won't go to yours. So we did this in Tel Aviv, in Alexandria, at the beginning. Alexandria then was so ill-served by hotels, it was a disaster. Strauss just told both sides, you guys figure out a way to get us to Cairo because I'm not coming back here. And he was quite right. One morning he had a particularly difficult session. Then broke for lunch and came back. Strauss was not in a good mood. He'd been having a hard time. The Israelis had 5 Cabinet Ministers on their negotiating team, the different factions of the Likud were all represented. Begin, after he got back from Camp David, he realized that he had given away far more than he should have. All of his old cronies voted against the treaty, including Arens and Shamir, one of which abstained, one voted against, I forget which. You might say the leavening in the loaf of the Likud government under Begin was Moshe Dayan and Ezer Weizman. Dayan quit because he wasn't going to be, as Foreign Minister, he wasn't going to be in charge of negotiations. He was going to be a subordinate of the Nationalist religious party leader, Yosef Burg. Burg had great humor, lots of stories to tell. Weizman got out too. That took the leavening out of the loaf of the Likud. So Begin had 5 Cabinet Ministers on the Israeli side. The Prime Minister of Egypt, Mr. Faruk Mustafa Khalil, a great gentleman, as leader of the Egyptian delegation. So there you had the head of the nationalist religious party, and you've got the Egyptian Prime Minister, a man of great dignity and marvelously well-spoken English and all of that, a real gentleman of the old school. So there are these characters. We sat down again and Strauss said-”Gentlemen before we begin, I've been thinking over lunch and I've got one thing I want to say about the atmosphere here,” he said in his Texas accent, he said, “You know negotiating with you people is like wiping your ass with a wagon wheel. It never ends. “ Poor Mr. Khalil went red at the use of that kind of language. It was just startling. Strauss was quite a guy. He also said that after he'd had his first look at the ground, so to speak, of the Palestinian question, the Israelis took him in a helicopter. The press asked

him what he thought of it, now that he'd seen the ground. He said, “I don't know why one side would want it and I don't know why the other side would give a damn. “ But he had marvelous political skills. They just weren't going to work there. The kinds of things he was good at were not going to work there. He didn't have any clout, really, from Carter. Carter was already, in the Spring of '79, wondering what kind of election he was going to have to face in '80. Terribly bedeviled by the hostage situation of course which had just started.

Q: This is the hostage situation in our Embassy in Iran, November 1979.

CLUVERIUS: So he had this massive success in the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli treaty and then being horribly bedeviled by the Tehran situation. Of course losing Cyrus Vance, as you say in May of '80, then Muskie comes in. He didn't have any clout either from either party. Begin did not want to do what everybody believed the second half of Camp David required. And Sadat wasn't going to put any steam into it because he didn't want the Palestinian issue to upset the time table of the treaty—getting back the oil fields and the Gulf of Suez, getting the Israelis out of the Sinai, because that was supposed to be a phased process not to be completed until '82. Begin of course didn't want to go anywhere with it. Carter of course was bedeviled at home. So Strauss didn't have a lot of cards. As I think I said before, we did concentrate therefore, without anybody sitting down and saying—hey we can't really push this thing because the President is weakened here and the Egyptians don't want to move—that was never put on the table openly, even amongst ourselves. We did, as I said before, clear a lot of the underbrush. Through the summer of '79, then in September Ted Kennedy decided that he was going to challenge Carter for the nomination. It was only a matter of weeks or less, as I recall it, that Strauss said he was finished with this job. The President asked him to be his campaign manager, help fight off the Kennedy challenge. There was a very brief hiatus I think, then Sol Linowitz was named. He had helped the Panama Canal negotiations along with Ellsworth Bunker for President Carter. I think I've also mentioned that be was a tremendous gentleman. So it was only in the late fall of '79 that we had Sol, just before his 67th birthday, as I recall.

Q: The election was in the Fall of '80.

CLUVERIUS: So again he didn't have a lot of mandate to really rock the boat. But as I think I've said before, we did a lot of brushwork. Sol did his own work very thoroughly. Gradually of course he found it very difficult to deal with Begin, Begin was adamant about so many things. He was not going to give up. He may have believed it or pretended to believe it, but he really felt that having given up the Sinai, he really had Sadat's tacit understanding that there wasn't going to be a hell of a lot for the Palestinians in this deal.

[INTERRUPTION]

CLUVERIUS: Sadat of course hadn't agreed to that at all. He had led Begin probably to believe it so that he could get the treaty. So there was a lot of this difficult misunderstanding here. As you remember, we almost lost the whole thing on the settlements issue anyway. Right after Camp David, when Begin and Carter went after it in hammer and tongs in public and private. With Carter backing off basically, not wanting to risk the achievement on the one issue. Which I think Sadat probably quite agreed with. So we struggled along, we had Jim Leonard, who was kind of the on-the scenes guy in the Middle East. He had both an apartment in Tel Aviv and in Cairo for even-handedness. He had one staff member. Then the team would come out with the Special Negotiator, Sol. There were just 7 or 8 of us. Myself, Bill Kirby, Ned Walker, Sue Shea, our secretary, Tom Pianka, an army Colonel who was a superb Military Advisor, and a few other people, some lawyers and things like that, Al Kreczko, who's still in the State Department Legal Office. So we struggled along through the end of '79 into '80 and early '80, I think I said I left my formal job in the bureau at Sol's request to be full time for him. Before that I was Director of the office for Jordan, Syria, Iraq and Lebanon. I dropped that and was full time with Sol. It was a good delegation. Sol did his homework. Gradually it got very painful for him to deal with Begin. Sol didn't cost anything, he was working for nothing, a dollar-a-year man kind of thing. We'd fly out in a 707 and basically try to move Begin on one issue of such small importance. But they came to block everything. Every time it looked like

we were getting somewhere, the Israeli side would stick on some point and even make it an issue that if we don't get this solved our way then we can't go on. Lots of histrionics, political histrionics and theater that we kept struggling through. We had working groups on, God knows, everything you could think of—elections, and all those different pieces of what autonomy might mean. I can give an example. I remember an 8-hour day spent with some Israeli lawyers trying to make the point that they said autonomy but they didn't know what they were talking about. We tried to make the point and said—okay, if they're autonomous and the little West Bank town of Tulkarm, which is very close to the old West Bank-Jordan-Israel border, they're autonomous then they've gotta have a budget. The Israelis would say—yeah but they can't just do anything they want. Well, we'd say, they'd have to do anything they'd want with their budget. We'd put the point to them—look, they decide that their road, leading towards Israel which is 100 meters down the way, whatever, has got too many potholes in it and they're gonna fix it. But your budget on your side isn't gonna fix that road for three years. They're gonna fix their side. The Israelis would say —no, no, they're gonna have to coordinate that with us. Then we said—then they're not autonomous. Well, that's just coordination. Well, if it's just coordination then it's either mandatory or isn't. If it's mandatory it's not autonomy; if it isn't mandatory, then they're going to tell you to go to hell. They're gonna fix the road when they want to fix it. That kind of thing would go on 8 hours a day.

Q: Was this by design or was this just the way things had to be worked on?

CLUVERIUS: It was in part by design and partly the nature of the beast. We were exploring a new concept. For the Israelis autonomy was one thing but laying the ground work for independence was another. So every practical day-to-day issue that you try to discuss always ran into the ideology. We're going to give them autonomy, damn it, we're not going to give them independence. Which was the Israeli point of view. So as we explored new ground, every time you kicked a rock in the new ground, you tripped over ideology. Now we struggled on through that: then, of course, came elections in the Fall of '80. At which point Sol, of course, resigned and everything went into hiatus. At that

point, Bob Neumann became the Department of State transition team coordinator, you may remember. Curt Winsor became the NEA coordinator and he and I had been in the joining foreign service class together. He had left after a couple of tours and went into banking. But he stayed actively in Republican politics. So they asked for me, as I recall it. Hal Saunders said—they want you to do the bureau coordination, so I sat down with the transition. So I sat down with Curt Winsor. He said—you write papers for us. And I said—sure, I'll write papers for you and I won't coordinate with anybody, I'll write them myself because you asked for me to do it. But I won't give you any paper that I won't show to the Assistant Secretary as long as he's still the Assistant Secretary- And that worked, that worked quite well. It was kind of humorous. One of the first papers I was asked to write was what could we do about Qadhafi. I mean, even on the first weeks after election, Qadhafi and Libya had become the b#te noire for the Reagan incoming administration.

Q: They tended to see things black and white, there was evil and there was a couple of other things they focused on—Sandinistas.

CLUVERIUS: They had their focal points, some of the new team coming in very young academics. My impression was, where they got people problem is that, obviously they're not going to bring in Democrats. But even more, they were even more ideologically adamant, it seemed to me, against bringing in what anybody might call, Jerry Ford, Ike Eisenhower, or Kissinger-type Republicans. Now you take people that you could put those labels on, certain kinds of Republicans, all Democrats, then you take what's left and try to staff a government. And in fact they didn't have much left. They got some academics, Middle East academics who were not top drawer in terms of their professional reputations. They got some young lawyers who had worked in the campaign and had a Middle East interest but not much expertise, not many real credentials. Because they wouldn't touch the Kissinger people. It was hard to get a good job for Jock Covey who had been Kissinger's staff aide. And people were told—forget Covey for an important job right now because we're not going to have anybody that used to walk down the airplane steps behind Henry Kissinger. It was like that. Jock went off to be number 2 man in Jerusalem

for a few years. Of course he's now the senior deputy in NEA, he just finished being DCM in Cairo. So there was that, there was a lot of these guys, enthusiastic amateurs, but with fewer credentials for this kind of work then otherwise would have been the case if there hadn't been this ideological bias against a large segment of their own party.

Q: Okay you had a lack of expertise. But how about ideology,. I know there was ideology obviously for the Caribbean and all that, Central America. But how about for this.

CLUVERIUS: There was ideology involved, some of the newcomers, some of whom are still around in government in important places so I'll leave some names out. Some of them came in

Q: Give us some names please.

CLUVERIUS: So we had the transition period and it was clear pretty soon that Al Haig was going to be Secretary of State. The transition was awkward, these guys didn't know very much. They had ideological biases as far as the Middle East went. They really felt, and it showed up in a paper that was written, not right away after the election. In fact it was probably not written until after inauguration. But one of these guys, who's still around, wrote a paper, and I won't say the name because I'm not sure which one it was. But basically said that the Carter administration and the academics elsewhere and all of that really didn't understand the situation. It's that regional conflicts like the Arab-Israeli problem were not going to be resolvable unless the parties understood the United States was going to protect them against the Soviets; then the concessions necessary would flow like water. That the Palestinian issue had really been a creation of the Carter administration. And that really what the problem was, was that all of our friends out there were insecure because the Carter administration didn't have the strength to defend our friends' approach to foreign affairs. Once the Palestinians, the Jordanians, the Israelis understood that there was a firm unyielding shield between them and the evil empire,

once they understood that, their regional conflicts would fade in significance and be easily resolved.

Q: Evil empire being the Soviet Union.

CLUVERIUS: Yes, the Reagan phrase. There was this ideology and we spent many nights writing it out of briefing papers — slowly, diplomatically, politely producing drafts. These guys would go over it and they'd produce their drafts. We'd go over it and try to negotiate a paper that bore some sense to the reality on the ground. A lot of this took place rather quickly after the inauguration. I think one of the first Haig trips, to the Middle East was probably in March of '81.

Q: I'd like to get a little feel about how this works to somebody who is unfamiliar. I mean, here you are, you're the professionals you see this thing, as I think most people who have dealt with it at all, this has very little to do with the Soviet Union or really the United States. These things are endemic to these countries. After all this is a new, Your new master you might say, they come in and you're the professionals, how did you sort of work. It sounds in many ways like this is the real diplomacy, is how to educate very quickly the new boys, American boys on the block.

CLUVERIUS: It's very difficult. A transition, especially if it's a hostile takeover shall we say, you know, from one party changing over to the other. They're going to look upon the professionals as probably subversive or something. Because a lot of these people couldn't understand, you get a lot of political types who still don't understand how you can serve the administration of one party and still serve another honestly. They don't understand professionalism in that sense. They come from a highly politicized world as young lawyers or academics with interest in working for the party. There is a tendency to think that the world is born anew the day their man gets elected. And of course, the world isn't born anew the day their man gets elected. Now they did have a problem with the Middle East. They did have to listen to us. One of the main achievements of the Carter administration

was the Egyptian-Israeli treaty. That was a first. No one else had every produced a piece on that front. It was not yet implemented, it was in the process of being implemented. The treaty is implemented in phases. So they were elected in the Fall of '80, Israel wasn't supposed to withdraw fully from the Sinai until April of '82, there were phases in between. So they had to pay serious attention to it in order not to be accused of losing the peace.

Q: I mean this was very, much something that they were very, aware of.

CLUVERIUS: They didn't want to for obvious political reasons and for the subject itself of course. They didn't want to make mistakes in the Middle East that would cause the Israelis to refuse to withdraw, that would destroy the peace, that would be a huge bludgeon in the hands of the Democrats in the next election, the off-term election. So that meant they had to pay some attention to those of us who knew something about it. But it was difficult, you had to persuade them of lots of realities.

Q: What about something like, you had President Reagan coming in, he was a Governor of California and had served in Hollywood? Obviously this is a center of Israeli oriented, friendly politics. I would think this would give quite a cast, that would not be even-handed but would he very pro-Israeli to this.

CLUVERIUS: It was very pro-Israeli and not only because of the, in fact, I don't think that the Hollywood thing had much to do with the pro-Israeliness. The pro-Israeliness came up very quickly, very early on, in the sense of the whole ideological framework that they brought with them. Which was that Carter made the United States appear weak, defense spending on new weapons and all was lousy, our friends abroad felt exposed. You couldn't be successful in foreign affairs unless you not only were strong vis-#-vis your potential enemies, much stronger than we were in their view, but also strong enough to protect your friends. And then you look at your friends. Who's the real strong friend, who's the bulwark against the communist in the Middle East-Israel. There was a strategic reason and of course they soon started to use that phrase word, strategic alliance, with Israel. So there

was very much a strong ideological bias in favor of countries like Israel. In the Middle East there's only one country like Israel, it's Israel.

Q: Did you feel that you were sort of having to protect what you might say your own flank or that of the foreign service of not appearing to be this anti-Israeli pro-Arabist bias group or something like this?

CLUVERIUS: There's no doubt in my mind that the new guys, the transition guys who were working on the Middle East, and of course that's all I saw was the transition on the Middle East, that they checked us out. Which of us had good credentials with the Israelis, that kind of thing. And of course I had been involved with the Israelis a long time. I still had and still have I think pretty good credentials on the Israeli side. So they checked us out and I think a couple of people whom we might have liked to have with us on this team we didn't bring on the team because they weren't going to be acceptable. But they did have to listen to the professionals because here we'd created at the working level, the treaty. We'd done the negotiating on the autonomy, the second half of Camp David. There was something they could work with once they got their ideological blinkers off a bit. They knew they didn't want to be accused of losing the treaty, so they had to plunge in, they had to make the effort to prove to the Egyptians that the U.N. would not supply the peace keeping force, that took over a year. So they had to pay some attention. Some of the new guys are still around—Dennis Ross came in then, Richard Haus who is now at the White House although I heard he's leaving, Francis Fukayama, Dan Handle. And of course Haig came in, his top 2 aides that he brought in with him are both Jewish—Woody Goldberg and Harvey Sickerman. But this was an ideological bias in favor of Israel's strength, its known quantity, a long standing bulwark in the area against Soviet encroachment. All of that made a pro-Israeli bias really independent of the Jewish lobby and all of that. It was a strategic bias. And of course Israelis are tough and toughness appealed to the Reagan administration. of business. I think some of these people, with some validity, saw Nixon as the guy who opened the way to China. No democrat could have gotten away with it. They saw Begin as the guy who opened up to the Arabs. The conservatives are the ones

that could take the tough decisions. Begin is giving up the Sinai just like Nixon opened up to China. And, by God, you've got to be tough in order to be able to do this opening up. And that's a valid, arguable, political posture. And that's what they came into office with. Of course there were a lot of people around that had been professionals at senior levels identified too closely with the Iranian debacle and it was clear they were going to go. Hal Saunders retired, there were other people involved, Henry Precht who had been head of Iranian affairs was kind of hidden away for a while as DCM in Cairo. They certainly didn't want anybody around that was tarred with the Iranian brush at a visible senior level like Assistant Secretary. And so in comes Nick Veliotes. He had been Ambassador in Jordan. It's a couple of weeks as I recall before or around the time of inauguration and I'd been working on the thing since Camp David itself in '78 when I'd come back from Bahrain. I really wanted to move on. In fact I wanted to be Ambassador to Jordan. So Nick was back and the rumor of course was around that he was going to be the Assistant Secretary. That it would be announced right after inauguration. And I said, Nick, whom I knew well, if you're going to be the Assistant Secretary, I'd like to replace you in Amman. Nick said, there is no way you're going to leave this building. You're going to be the peace-process guy, you know as much about it as anybody. I did have an advantage for him as a negotiator. I had already been an Ambassador so I could go out on trips on my own, I had the cache of- the rank, which made me the senior member of the working team. And so Nick said, you're going to stay right here. You're going to be Deputy Assistant Secretary of State. You're going to be the link between me and whoever will be the Special Negotiator if this team wants a Special Negotiator and they may not. At first they didn't. Which I think they were right about; the only way to really get things done is the way Carter did it. He and his Secretary of State doing it personally. He and Cyrus Vance. So Nick says, you're not going anywhere, you're going to stay right here and so I did. I think I would have rather gone abroad at that point. And very quickly we had to get things moving in the Middle East, we had to do this business of convincing the Egyptians that the UN was not going to do the job. That meant we had to do all this consultations in New York. The Security Council had tried to press the president of the Council as early as possible to say

—look, the Council cannot create the UN force called for by the Egyptian-Israeli treaty, you'll have to do it elsewhere. And of course Carter had given Begin and Sadat letters that if the UN wouldn't do it, we would. So that had to go forward. I mean here you are after Inauguration, it's suddenly Spring of '81, Israel has a year left to get out of the Sinai completely and nothing is in place in terms of peace keeping. So they had to push on with that. Somewhere in there didn't we get the bombing of the Iraq reactor in March of '81, somewhere in there?

Q: I'm not sure we did at that point.

CLUVERIUS: It was the Israeli raid on Iraq's reactor and, if you recall we condemned that raid at the UN. We had a meeting with Al Haig, Nick and I went up. Paul Wolfowitz was there, Rick Burt and some other people, head of P/M, whatever, all these new guys and they all wanted to justify the raid as legitimate self-defense by the Israelis under article 51 of the Charter UN. And they had all kinds of fancy ways to do this. Get the Legal Advisor to draw up an opinion. Haig finally turned to Nick-What do you think of that route'? And Nick said—Mr. Secretary you can go that way but if you do, this administration will not have a Middle East policy for the next 4 years. You may lose the treaty, you will have nowhere to go in the Middle East if you jump on the Israeli bandwagon on this one. And we didn't. In fact Jeane Kirkpatrick in New York got persuaded, I think by the Iraqis there, that this was a real bad deal. Also, there was a certain annoyance in the Administration: here they were about to protect the Israelis from the evil empire, they saw the Israelis as a strategic ally, they were going to do a lot more for them than Carter ever had, and here the Israelis are making big waves with this raid on Baghdad. So there was a sense of pique, I think, as well. But anyway under the guidance, I think of Tony Parsons, who was then the British Ambassador to the UN, who took it upon himself, as I heard, I don't have direct evidence here, to kind of educate Jeane Kirkpatrick into the real ways of diplomacy in New York. He did quite a good job. That's just hearsay. I've heard Tony Parsons kind of became her mentor. He's a very bright, extraordinary able guy. So then we had to go out with Al Haig and make all those Middle East trips with Al. The first one was very painful because we

had to rewrite these papers. These papers kept coming from his people and we had to rewrite them and make some sense out of this attitude that the concessions for further peace will flow like milk and honey once these people realize that we're going to defend them against the Soviets. That the Palestinian issue is kind of a phony issue. All regional conflicts really are functions of the East-West conflict, that was the ideological bias. And that these regional conflicts therefore didn't have a serious life of their own. Not a damn thing to do with us or the Soviet Union except people tried to use us and the Soviet Union for their own local purposes. But we had to write papers and get around all this kind of business.

Q: Did you get a feel for Haig's attitude towards Israel? Because you know members of the Joint Chief of Staff have been asked from time to time, I recall this even when I was in the senior seminar, what is the strategic importance of Israel. And the answer is—very little. It only gets us into trouble. It really doesn't stand as a place that?s going to serve as a strike force against the Soviet Union or something. I mean here he is a military man, commander of NATO and all, how did he see Israel?

CLUVERIUS: I think he did see it in some ideological terms and he did believe in the general proposition, I'm sure, as the Reagan administration came in. Previous administration had been too weak, did not project American power, was not spending enough on enhancing American power, that we were looking weak in the world, that Tehran debacle made it worse, and that the United States should be doing , more to protect its friends, more to advance its friends, that the world is largely black and white. What the subtleties of his thoughts were I never really heard him express that much. His first trip to the Middle East we had to rewrite a lot of these papers so they'd reflect some reality. I always had the feeling, again no direct evidence, that Haig didn't worry too much about the ideologues that he brought in. That they were brought in as part of the new team in the Department in the Middle East area. Haig had his own views, probably had a great deal more accurate grip on the realities out there than some of these young enthusiastic new people. I think he had his own view. Didn't express it very often that I can recall. But

I do think he saw Israel as a major strategic asset that Carter had treated badly. And he probably had 3 or 4 other places around the world in the same category in his mind. And I think it showed later, he was intrigued by the idea later, 2 years later as you recall, he was intrigued by the idea that the Palestinian problem could be made to just disappear by force, the Sharon thesis. He was very much seduced by Sharon and his ideas about that. The idea that the Palestinian problem could be made to go away without having to lean on an ally, Israel, to contribute anything to the Palestinian issue.

Q: This is the invasion of Lebanon.

CLUVERIUS: The Israeli invasion of Lebanon in June of '82. He disagreed with some of the professional judgment. He had his own judgment which I heard him express in rather apocalyptic terms on one of his first trips to the area. That basically Egypt's regime would disappear, unstable all of that. That within 6 months they'd be going back towards the Soviet Union; that they were an unreliable partner, but had to keep the peace that we had just achieved. But let's not have any illusions, the Egyptians are inherently still enemies of Israel and will go back in that direction the first chance they get. Which was not the professional judgment, it was not the judgment of our Ambassador there, who was Roy Atherton. Roy and Haig did not have a comfortable relationship. So Haig had his own weak spots I think here.

Q: How did this play out, what were you doing during the sort of the "Haig time? there?

CLUVERIUS: Well as I said, Veliotes did become Assistant Secretary, I was to become Deputy Assistant Secretary. It was really kind of a replay of the staffing arrangement, post Camp David. I was to become Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Arab-Israeli peace process. The second half of Camp David. While Mike Sterner continued on following the peace treaty and managing the implementation thereof. Mike was basically in charge of that along with Jock Covey, General Lawrence, and Bill Kirby played in that game as well. Again a division between the Egyptian-Israel treaty and the rest of the Arab-Israeli

problem which I was supposed to do. That was '81. I didn't get to be Deputy Assistant Secretary formally until near the end of the year when Mike retired. Also they couldn't get a lot of deputies through because of some political dispute. There were like 15 or 16 in the Department that were held up because of some guy who had been Charge in Cuba, head of the Interests Section there. I don't remember exactly what it was but it was Jesse Helms giving the Department a hard time. What I was to do starting in the Spring of '81 which at the beginning meant traveling around with Al Haig and writing the papers and pulling the team together, some of the new guys that came in were added to the team—Richard Haas briefly, Dan Handle, Frank Fukayama at greater length, Dennis Ross, I can't remember where Dennis was at the time. He didn't really get into this until later. So we basically tried to pick up where we'd left off, the autonomy negotiations and all that. Again it was clear that you're not going to go very far with this because again you're getting very close to the end of the implementation of the treaty, we had to get this peacekeeping organization in place. Sadat certainly didn't want to rock the boat, neither did the Reagan administration take any chance that Israel wouldn't withdraw. And then as we will see later, it was a very close thing as a result. So that gave the Israelis a lot of leverage. The Egyptians didn't want to rock the boat, the Americans didn't want to rock the boat, so we couldn't do a hell of a lot really. You had other things happening in the Middle East if you recall. We had the Israeli raid on the Iraqi reactor in Spring of '81. Then there was a heating up of the Lebanon border in the Summer of '81. Phil Habib was put on the job, on the Lebanon angle as kind of a Special Envoy - And indeed made a deal with the Israelis and the Syrians and basically with the PLO that was scaled I think in July of '81 that really did calm the border. It drove Arik Sharon crazy I think because he really couldn't stand that they had made a deal with the PLO even if indirectly. And of- course I think he already had his own perception of how you deal with the PLO in South Lebanon, which was by war. By defeating the PLO in the field, so to speak, you defeat the idea of being Palestinian, That's a false and dangerous deduction but I think it's proven that is where he was leading. So the idea that the border was really quiet probably disturbed him. And a year later of course it would not be quiet. All the time the Israeli political scene was heating up. There were

lots of arguments that the Egyptians were not meeting their commitments under the treaty and why should we leave. We should have negotiated tougher and keep the settlements in the North Sinai. So it was quite clear to the Americans and the Egyptians that the pot was really boiling in Israeli politics. There was an election that summer of '81. In which the Likud won again. And unlike the first Likud government in '77, the one in '81 didn't have a lot of leavening in the loaf, such as Dayan and Weizman in the first Likud government, men with a great deal more worldly experience, breadth of understanding, breadth of knowledge than a lot of the people in the Likud. The Likud had been in the opposition for generations. They'd never been in power until '77. So these guys really came in out of the cold, so to speak. Not a lot of worldly experience or worldly knowledge or education. So the second government was a very tough one. And Sharon of course became Defense Minister with a lot of implications for planning and all of that and also for the way they ran things in the territories. So a lot was happening in this first Reagan year of '81 in the Middle East. A lot was going on. They wanted to strengthen their friends which meant not only the Israelis but also of course it meant people like the Saudis. It wasn't just a pro-Israeli bias but that was clearly seen I think by Haig as the strongest reed upon which to lean on the Middle East. And that again is certainly an arguable proposition. So we were trying to struggle on. Make sure the Egyptian-Israeli treaty got implemented on time; that the Israelis withdrew on time in the Spring of '82; that we could try to make some progress on these autonomy talks. Because we'd have to get into that full bore so to speak once the treaty was implemented fully, and the Israelis were completely out of the Sinai, and Egyptian sovereignty was restored, and the peace keeping force was in place. Then we'd turn our attention without that distraction back to the Palestinian half of the Camp David equation. And that's what we were doing but we were doing it at a much more relaxed pace. I think you'd have to look in the book somewhere to see when Richard Fairbanks was made Special Negotiator. As a lawyer, political planner, basically a Bushman.

Q: Well I just have him coming in '82. I'm not sure when though.

CLUVERIUS: I can't recall, I'd have to look it up.

Q: That's all right.

CLUVERIUS: I can't remember when the administration decided to go to a special negotiator. They had Phil Habib who did the Lebanon border business in July of '81 but when did Fairbanks come in, I really don't recall. When he did come in I became his Deputy as well as Deputy Assistant of the Bureau. Which was awkward because he and Nick didn't hit it off that well.

Q: This was not his (Fairbanks) area, I mean he'd been Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations, doing maybe odd jobs during his term but he didn't come in and he certainly wasn't a Strauss, or a Linowitz. I mean a completely different level.

CLUVERIUS: He was a different level, no doubt about it. And when he came in I really have a hell of a time remembering. But I became his Deputy as well as Deputy of the Bureau. And of course we rocked along there in '81. I can't recall how many trips we did. Haig was going to do a lot of this himself.

Q: Did Haig go through a learning curve in dealing particularly with Begin and company and also with the Egyptians? Or did he see that this was a very difficult group to negotiate with or did he more or less accept how they saw things, the Likud group?

CLUVERIUS: I think he went through a learning curve, everyone does. I think he was very intrigued by it. There was a certain superficial, I would call it superficial, I guess it was not superficial it was real, that there should be an affinity between the Likud government that came in '81 and the Reagan administration. They're both conservatives, but that word has quite different meanings in two very different contexts. I think people, there was this kind of feeling that we ought to be able to get along well with Begin and these guys. They?re coming from where we're coming from in terms of ideology. That's nonsense but there was that feeling. I think he was getting along well with Egyptians, I think he

was doing all right with the Jordanians. And I was on the trips that involved those places but you'd have to look at the record and see how many there were in '81. But of course then in September of '81, October actually of '81, the assassination of Sadat. You know extremely frightening, lots of people wondering whether that was going to be the end of the treaty and all this kind of business. Sadat had just been in Washington not long before that. As I recall the way it went, Haig went out a few times early in the administration, March I think was his first trip. There was also a feeling that he wasn't going to do too much of that. He wanted to bring those people to us and did so after the Israeli election; Begin, Sadat, probably King Hussein. Sadat had been in Washington not long before his assassination. The day he was killed we were watching the TV in Nick's office and listening to the news and talking to the Op Center. Roy had been with the Diplomatic Corps at that display that day, the military parade in October. It was commemorating the October war. Because that's not the Egyptian national day, that's July 12, so it must have been the Commemoration Parade. And of course everybody was getting shot, we didn't know if Roy was hurt, obviously no one knew right away whether Sadat was dead or not. It became apparent during the day as Roy got back to the Embassy and got in touch with people in the Egyptian government, who kept telling Roy, he's alive, he's alive. It's very bad but he's alive. And that was what Roy was reporting back on the secure phone. And then at one point this one stringer from one network, this woman, said she had a source in the hospital, absolute faith in this source, that Sadat was dead. The anchorman on the news, whoever it was, I forget, maybe it was ABC, said to her by name—do you realize that everything the Egyptian government is saying is different than that. They're saying that he's badly hurt and is being operated on. You're saying he's dead. You realize what you're saying. You are live, you are all around the United States and around the world on this network. This is not tape, you are live, do you stick with your story. The anchorman was shaken that she was saying that. Then she said she did, that she had a source who had also been an accurate source when the Shah had died in the same hospital. And she stuck with her story. Of course she was right. Haig was furious, I understood, with Roy Atherton for not getting that himself. Then there came the great funeral.

Q: What was the feeling at that time about Mubarak? I mean was he considered a lightweight?

CLUVERIUS: Yes, as Deputy Pharaohs always are.

Q: Sadat of course was considered the lightweight's lightweight.

CLUVERIUS: Exactly, exactly right. I mean the Deputy Pharaoh has to be a lapdog or he's never going to be Pharaoh. You can't tell what a Pharaoh's gonna be like until he becomes Pharaoh. We had this strange delegation which I must admit was really fascinating. The Secret Service did not want Reagan to go so Al Haig was the head of the delegation, which included Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, Mrs. Carter, Henry Kissinger and Richard Nixon. Along with Walter Cronkite, as part of the delegation, he had just retired at that point. I was there, along with Morris Draper, Ned Walker, some guy on the Vice President's staff and loads of others. There was some criticism that the President didn't go but the Secret Service said no way are you going into that messy kind of thing. So they had this rather strange delegation where the head of the delegation was the Secretary of State.

Q: The Nasser funeral had been almost a mob affair.

CLUVERIUS: This one was too actually. Then we had some other characters in there. Some woman, a very prominent Republican woman, I can't remember who it was, part of the delegation. The delegation got quite large. Then we took over the hotel, that's now a Hyatt I think, it's near the airport. We took over the whole thing, it's a very nice hotel. Because it was a funeral the night before we had an in-house delegation dinner. But obviously didn't invite any Egyptian guest. A dinner party is not what you have the day before a funeral of a Chief of State. Some of the professionals were upset because we wanted Hermann Eilts and his wife Helen included in the delegation. No one had been closer to the Sadats really then Hermann and Helen. He had been the molder and the

keeper of the Kissinger-Sadat relationship and they were very close. The families were very close. We couldn't do it. The White House said—No, this guy served there under the Democrats, why should we include him in a Republican delegation. Which I thought was rather mean-spirited but anyway, Hermann and Helen didn't get to go. The Egyptian government invited them separately, but Hermann said no, that wouldn't be appropriate. And offered to pay as I understood it. But it would have looked funny and Hermann is a very straight guy, and he didn't do it. Anyway, we get there and of course everybody is wondering if the place is going to come apart, if there's going to be civil strife. The security was horrendous. And the working stiffs were doing the briefing papers. But we had this marvelous dinner it was really weird, all these characters there, Walter Cronkite. This was the first time Richard Nixon had been publicly rehabilitated to do anything. So he was feeling absolutely fantastic. And we stopped to land in Torrejon on the way, and there were two planes.

Q: This is in Spain.

CLUVERIUS: Yeah, Torrejon Air Base. We were going to refuel and get coffee and donuts, it's like 6 in the morning or something. We had left Andrews Air Force Base at night, 2 aircraft. All the armored cars had gone in C5A's ahead of us. We got off our plane and the delegation was in the lead plane or the other plane and the working stiffs and the press on the second plane. And there's the dawn, a Spanish dawn. It was really quite a nice morning with just a bit of fog. A friend and I were walking and he said, “Look back.” And about 25 feet behind us walking together in a lineup: Kissinger, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Jody Powell, Mrs. Carter. All walking in a line through the early morning Spanish fog, it was quite a sight. So we get to Egypt and we get to the hotel with these great cavalcades and we have that dinner. Barbara Walters went bananas because

Q: She's a columnist, a television,

CLUVERIUS: She had been one of the instruments which brought Sadat and Begin together in the first place. Getting that interview with Sadat in which he said, out of the clear blue sky, that he'd be willing to talk to the Israelis in Jerusalem. But she was not included in the dinner because it was only for the delegation. And she went bananas, you could hear her screaming out in the lobby because Walter Cronkite was there. He was included in the dinner because he was part of the delegation, he was retired. But she didn't think that was quite legitimate. It was a very strange dinner with Nixon waxing eloquent about everybody. He was full of such warm feelings at being rehabilitated that he was congratulating the foreign service, congratulating the busboys, the waiters, everybody. Gerald Ford didn't say much. In fact he had the very good sense to stay quiet and very graciously saying that really one of the things that we be thankful for is the work of President Carter in making this peace possible. It was quite a strange place to have dinner. In fact at the end of the evening Morris Draper and Ned Walker and I, were going to an elevator to go upstairs and there was an elevator open with a guy standing there and there was nobody in it. I didn't recognize it was any security that we knew, the Secretary's security or anyone like that. It turned out that Kissinger still had security. Maybe he still does, I don't know. But it was his security guy and he looked a little upset when we just charged in and stood in the elevator. He didn't quite know what to do and was thinking of asking us to move out. Kissinger approached at that point. And the bodyguard said, “Mr. Secretary, there's somebody in there. “ And Kissinger kind of leaned in and said, “There's nobody in there but the foreign service. “ He said it was okay because he knew all 3 of us. And so he got in and we're riding up and he said, “You know, the foreign service treated me great. You guys really could have done me some bad turns but the service was always loyal.” Morris, I think it was, said, “Yeah, Mr. Secretary, but we were tempted sometimes. “ It was a very nice, jovial exchange.

[INTERRUPTION]

CLUVERIUS: Some of us watched the funeral on TV because we were working on the meetings we would have after the funeral when we would start talking substance with Mubarak. The Egyptian TV was fascinating, how they handled it, very sophisticated. The film clips, of course all the music and the Koran readings, but the film clips of Sadat and then of Mubarak went back to Nasser and then showing the relationship between Nasser and Sadat. And increasingly there's the great man Nasser with a few shots of Sadat present but not obvious. Then more shots showing Sadat often present with Nasser, that kind of thing. And then, the same thing with Sadat. Lots of Sadat, his life, his achievements, with Carter, with Begin, with all the world leaders, with nobody with him in those particular clips. And then gradually there's Mubarak in the background, Mubarak in the middle ground and then Mubarak up front. Very cleverly done.

There's first Mubarak in the background, then he's in the middle ground, then he's in the foreground, then his achievements as vice-president, and he fills the screen. This takes days, this took 2-3 days as these things ran. With the counterpoint being, showing Boutros Ghali, the senior Copt in the Egyptian government, Boutros sprinkled around with Nasser, with Sadat, with Mubarak, on his own at the OAU or something like that. The counterpoint for the Coptic community. It was fascinatingly done. So the next day, after all these characters go home, The Fords and the Jody Powells and all, off we went to see Mubarak. He was a very shaken man. No one really knew whether there was going to be serious unrest as a result of this or whether it really was an isolated incident. It was a very basic conversation, he reaffirmed his commitment to the treaty, he hoped the Israelis were not going to do what a lot of their columnists and all this dither in Israel was about—not withdrawing and all of that, now the place had come unstable, how could the Israelis be sure Mubarak. Of course Mubarak sat there with the Secretary of State and of course reaffirmed his commitment to the treaty. He said it was not Sadat's achievements, it was an achievement for Egypt and the Egyptian people. Israeli should be told not to worry too much about the change in command. It's a tragedy but it doesn't change Egyptian policy or the direction of it. All the right sounds of course. So then we had a new ball game.

[CLUVERIUS INTERVIEW: TAPE 3]

CLUVERIUS: One of the things that was going on there was a substantial, in fact a continuing effort by the ideologues, so to speak, some of them...

Q: This is within the administration.

CLUVERIUS: Within the administration. To really change, try to change the terms of the Arab-Israeli peace problem. Jeane Kirkpatrick was very much interested in a kind of rewriting of history as to what Security Council Resolution 242 means. To change the American interpretation of that to fit more closely with the Likud interpretation of that. And Nick Veliotes was quite instrumental in fighting off these kinds of attempts to change long-standing policy in a way that professionally, he and I, felt were very unworkable, very damaging to our position as honest-broker in the area. None of these attempts came out of maliciousness or anything, they came out of ideological conviction. But they also did come out of a significant lack of understanding of what the realities are. If it's true that people are often most ignorant of what is closest to them, we're ignorant of what motivates Canadians for example, or Mexicans. I think that similarly the closeness of our relationship with Israel is marked by a great deal of mythology, a great deal of ignorance about what really makes that place tick and what doesn't. American Jews, I don't think know it that well. They think they do. But it's a different kind of a place. So I think it was very superficial for a conservative American administration to think that if you have a conservative Israeli administration, that label really means anything in terms of similarities of views. It really doesn't mean anything of the kind. But the Fall of '81, we did, we were not exactly spinning our wheels, but we were trying to keep the Phil Habib brokered cease fire in place in the north with some on the Israeli side, particularly Mr. Sharon, trying to rewrite it, what the deal was. The deal only related to the Lebanon border. And it was working from July '81 onward. But they wanted to rewrite it so to speak in political terms. To count any act against any Israeli anywhere as a violation of the deal. And of course the deal didn't cover any acts anywhere else. And of course, ultimately, in June of '82 it became the attempted

assassination of the Israeli Ambassador in London which provided the excuse. Ironically, his personal views were quite dovish on these issues. But became the spark for the hawks in Israel. Fairbanks was learning his trade during this period and he worked hard. He did work hard to do his homework. He worked hard to understand the players. I was his Deputy so was probably the professional who was closest to him. Later I think he had too much on his plate. There was the peace process, then later he got this Lebanon mess in '82 after the invasion. That was too much. In all of this we had something like a dozen special Middle East negotiators. The number from Camp David onward is something like, including. the special Lebanon negotiators, like a dozen or more. You have to remember that McFarlane came in, Rumsfeld was around for awhile, you had Fairbanks, you had Atherton, you had Draper on his own, you had Strauss, you had Linowitz, it was quite a number. But Fairbanks was learning his trade. The administration was going carefully. In the Spring of '81, the President of the Security Council finally said—It is now definitive that the United Nations cannot supply the peacekeeping force called for in the Egyptian-Israeli Treaty. Everybody was launched then to create this alternative force. Mike Sterner and others, went to various places to negotiate participation and it was not easy. The Arabs of course were against the Treaty. The Soviets were backing that. The Western Europeans were very nervous because all their Arab friends were saying this is terrible, there shouldn't have been a separate peace. I had the good fortune to go out. I became involved in setting up this peacekeeping force briefly in the Summer of '81. I went out to Fiji and negotiated the first infantry battalion into the multinational force. It was a nice change of scene. Spent 10 marvelous days in Suva. But then I was back on the Arab-Israeli peace thing again, with Fairbanks and company, trying to get the autonomy talks started. everybody understanding that no one's going to rock the boat so badly that the Egyptian-Israeli Treaty itself is threatened, the implementation is threatened. The Israelis were keeping their word. Moving back in phases as they were supposed to do. But by that time we hadn't really gotten into the tough ones. Which were the settlements. There was already a big negotiation internally in Israel between the settlers and the government for compensation. Some people were selling out at very nice prices to the government

but then their houses were being taken over by some of the more radical settlers from the West Bank. Ultimately the ones that had to be forced out of the Sinai settlements were very few of the original settlers. They were mostly the hard core anti-concession group from the West Bank. They went down to the Sinai in order to make trouble, But that was important, it looked very tough. There was a lot of sentiment on the right in Israel not to withdraw fully. Sharon as Defense Minister knew he would be responsible for implementation, didn't want to do it. And you may remember, what point it was in early '82 that Walt Stoessel, who was then Under Secretary for Political Affairs, had to go out in what amounted to a 17-day shuttle between Cairo and Jerusalem. To settle the final issues of Israeli withdrawal. And it was very painful. Walt did a brilliant job. I did not go on that trip and I can't remember why as a matter of fact. Dennis Ross I think was on it. Howard Teicher maybe. I know Ned Walker was on it. Stoessel himself. Morris Draper, Maurie did that one, that's right. Maurie and I did one thing or the other since we were roughly considered the same rank- or whatever. But it took, Walt Stoessel 17 days. The Israelis, particularly Sharon had long lists of alleged violations of the Treaty by Egypt which they wanted to claim justified Israel holding off its withdrawal. And all of these had to be dealt with in all seriousness even if some of them were clearly make-work kinds of things and it was very difficult. Walt finally settled it and got everything done except one major outstanding issue, which was only finished a year or so ago, which was called Taba. This is a little corner of the Sinai peninsula near Elat where the Israelis had built a hotel and a holiday village and they produced some crazy historical reason why Taba had never been Sinai in the first place. and therefore they didn't have to leave it. There was the interest in keeping the hotel and in keeping that little piece of coast, although the Israelis shouldn't have built it after the Treaty, which they did. But also I think there was a strong ideological reason. To be able to say, “we didn't leave it all.” They tried to do that by saying that isn't part of it anyway. And eventually it was put to arbitration. So the Israelis and the Egyptians for 3 years or whatever it was it took, more than that, God knows that thing bedeviled us until '88 or '89. They had 3 elderly judges sitting in Switzerland arbitrating this thing at a hundred thousand dollars ($100,000.00) apiece for 6 years. For a piece of sand that's

barely big enough for a hotel and 3 parking lots. Anyway, Walt Stoessel did a great job. He was very stubborn in wiping away all of these allegations against the Egyptians. And all of these reasons why Israelis didn't really have to leave all of the Sinai for one reason or another. And of course Begin was constantly saying to Sadat—why can't you leave me the settlements; you know I can't stand it politically. Sadat said—you knew that from the beginning and the Knesset voted; I can't allow the settlements to remain. There was a lot of that going on. But then indeed, the Israelis got out very painfully. Hauling people out, a lot of violence, fortunately no shooting, threats of suicide by the settlers and all. But they were pulled out. Israel kept its word, Egypt kept its word and the multinational force was put in place ready to work. They were put in place March of '82 and we were ready to take over at the end of April '82 when the Israelis finally, definitively marched out of the Sinai. And that meant that was time now again to turn our attention to the other half of Camp David. Which was the Palestinian question. Of course with the Israelis no more ready to consider that seriously then they were before. But there was a different situation now. The Egyptians or the Americans wouldn't have to worry about rocking the boat of withdrawal in the Egyptian-Israeli Treaty, that was done. In fact just after that in late May of '82, in order to restart the negotiations, in order to try to get over some of the obstacles, one of which was Begin's insistence that it had to be done in Jerusalem, which indeed had brought the previous effort in the Fall of '81 to a halt for awhile because the Egyptians would not go to Jerusalem for the negotiations. And there were other obstacles strewn around. And I was to take a small delegation out to see the Egyptians and Israelis, to see what maneuvering room we had to find a way to get the negotiations started again. Which was in their interest but there were certain things that they wouldn't do. So we were there and then we were supposed to spend 4 or 5 days there then go to Jerusalem and talk to the Israelis to see if we had some room to get this thing launched. In kind of a low-key way, it was a technical delegation. I recall the Friday when Shlomo Argov was shot in London.

Q: This is the Israeli Ambassador in London.

CLUVERIUS: A very nice man. He had been DCM in Washington at one time. I knew him, a very nice, gentle, quiet professional. And of course everybody was waiting for the other shoe to drop. That was Friday as I recall and Sunday we were to fly Air Sinai to Israel. But we were waiting for the other shoe to drop. Wondering what the Israelis would do. Sharon of course was planning, which we didn't know of course, to use this as an excuse for a major foray into Lebanon. On Sunday morning we went to the airport and discovered that Air Sinai had enough standbys to fill the plane and left an hour early. So we didn't have any flight. We had to go back into Cairo and get vehicles from the Embassy to drive across the Sinai. And have the Embassy in Tel Aviv to meet us. So we loaded a van, there were 7 of us, or 6, with some sandwiches and cool drinks and things and off we went. The Embassy in Cairo had called the Embassy in Tel Aviv to send a van and meet us. It's a good long days drive and off we went. We got to the border crossing at Rafah, from Egypt to Israel, and there was the Embassy guy, two vehicles for us, and saying that the Israelis had invaded Lebanon while we were driving across Sinai. I was to go immediately to Jerusalem, wait instructions at the Consulate General up there but in the meanwhile until we got detailed instructions, I was not to deal with the Israelis, there would be no meetings with the Israelis, the Administration is furious, the whole thing's a disaster. So off we went, the delegation was to go home right away. So I went up to the Consulate in Jerusalem. Brandon Grove, the CG, was off to bed I guess, it was pretty late by then, it was getting dark. Sam Lewis was sitting alone in Brandon's office.

Q: He was the Ambassador to Israel at the time.

CLUVERIUS: Yes. So Sam was sitting alone in Brandon Grove's office waiting for a secure phone call. I was waiting for detailed instructions. It certainly was a gloomy moment. The Israelis had run amuck basically.

Q: Just to put it in perspective, at least with the people, I mean you and others on the ground including Lewis and Brandon Grove who was the Consul General there, saw this as not a good idea.

CLUVERIUS: Not a good idea. And of course as we learned later, particularly from Israeli investigative journalists, Sharon was deceiving the Cabinet and deceiving the Prime Minister. He had this 25 mile/40 km zone that's all it was. At first they kind of pretended, or he pretended even at the Cabinet I think, that it was kind of a repeat of March '78 when the Israelis had gone in heavily into South Lebanon and Jimmy Carter had forced them out. An interesting thing, a period you should ask Dick Viets about someday because he delivered the ultimatum from Carter to Begin. But that's what it looked like. It was unclear and of course it was deliberately unclear by Sharon and his cronies. It was unclear to the Israeli Cabinet and the Israeli Prime Minister what his intentions were. Anyway I got up there and Sam was gloomily waiting for the secure phone to ring and when it did, it blew up. Sparks started to come out of there and there was smoke in the office. It was terrible. Sam and I were pretty gloomy about things. I got my instructions—Do not see the Israelis, send your delegation home and, to me, you will join the President and the Secretary in Europe. They were on the Paris-London-Bonn tour, President Reagan was. And of course Haig was with the President and they had no Middle East guy in the entourage so I was told to immediately catch up the next morning and the Embassy was to get me a ticket. To get me to London, I had missed the Paris portion. I was to catch up in Windsor and then join the Secretary and the party and go on to Bonn. To help manage the Middle East crisis in terms of the entourage. I didn't quite do what my instructions said—don't talk to the Israelis, cancel the meetings, send the delegation home, you catch up with the party. But my counterpart was a very fine gentleman, Chaim Kuburski. He would have been heading the little team which would have met with my little team to discuss reopening the negotiations. But I called Chaim and I said, “Chaim, officially you know this thing is a disaster. It's over. My delegation leaves in the morning- There'll be no meetings but why don't you and I just as friends, have dinner. The Sheraton Hotel in Jerusalem had recently

opened. Chaim was a very religious guy so we had to meet in a hotel because they're all kosher. Some restaurants are not. So we went over to the Sheraton which was relatively quite new then. And he was quite gloomy, he did not agree with his country's actions as far as I could see. He said it was a really sad thing. Apparently Chaim knew the Ambassador in London and he didn't like that sad event being a justification for invasion. The Sheraton Hotel had a promotion on in the dining room, “Drink of the Month,” you know hotels do that kind of thing. But this one was “American Dry Martini Cocktails.” Chaim said to me, “Is that the kind of drink that fits a day like this, a horrible day like this. People are getting killed and all. Is that the kind of drink that fits the day?” Chaim, I said, that drink was made for this kind of a day. He said, “I'll have one. “ He wasn't much of a drinker. So we both had one or a couple or three. And the next morning I went off to London and was picked up by the Brits or whatever and taken up to Windsor to join the Reagan party. And got there before the President and the Secretary of State. Some hours before. They were to arrive from Paris. So I walked into the command post kind of thing which was in a hotel across the street from the Castle itself. The President and Mrs. Reagan, the Haigs and a few other senior people would be staying at the Castle. The spear carriers were across the street in this little hotel. Which caught on fire that night actually. They had to evacuate us out and put out a fire somewhere. Anyway I get in there to the operations center which is huge for a President when he travels, in fact there was a separate one for the Secretary. And I said, okay where are the briefing papers. I knew most of these guys, colleagues, they said—all the Middle East stuff on the invasion is right there. I mean they hadn't done anything on it. It was just a pile of stuff, an undifferentiated mass. So I dug up some maps and read the cables and tried to prepare a briefing for the Secretary when he got there and brief the President if the Secretary wanted me to do so. I got it all ready, I had about 4-5 hours before they arrived. Then I went over to the Castle and saw the arrival which was quite splendid really with the British pageantry. Really quite impressive. Then went into the Secretary's suite and briefed him on where we were. Offered to go with him, either give him the briefing materials I prepared so he could use them himself or, I said, if you want

me to go with you to brief the President or the National Security Advisor. He declined. I don't know if the ever were briefed at Windsor.

Q: Did you get any feel because you know supposedly, Alexander Haig tipped a nod to Sharon or something?

CLUVERIUS: That goes back some months actually, in a visit. Haig had been shown maps by Sharon that he was intrigued by. He was a military man, he was intrigued by the PLO is this, they're acquiring this, they're becoming really more of an army than a terrorist group in South Lebanon. All of that. There was a point and I'm trying to, you'd have to check with Nick Veliotes to be the best checkpoint, there was a point in the visit of either Begin or Sharon in the Spring of '82. All I recall about it was that Nick was very upset. That he felt that we had not been firm enough with whichever visitor it was, if it was Begin or Sharon I can't remember which. To say, no way do we countenance a war in Lebanon, or your going into Lebanon, that the things you're complaining about vis-a-vis the Habib cease fire in the Lebanon border, those were not part of the deal. You're complaining about things that are not part of the deal. The deal was not broken. It is quiet up there. We would not countenance any action by you in Lebanon—that kind of thing. And that it had not been done firmly at all. And in fact, Nick went from Washington to New York to see the visitor again before he left the country to make the point. I think however it was Sharon and it doesn't matter if the Assistant Secretary comes up and says—we want to make sure that you heard clearly; don't do it. When in fact the man believes he got a nod from Haig. Whether he did or not, God only knows. But I certainly don't.

Q: What was Haig's reaction to this. Was he so caught up in the European side or was he saying—those sons of bitches they did it when we didn't want them to? Or—let's see how it plays out? What was his reaction?

CLUVERIUS: It seems to me that ... well of course there were other things happening here of which I was not privy. But everybody had the vibrations. There were tensions between Haig and the White House.

Q: I mean he'd gone through several threats of resignation and all that.

CLUVERIUS: He's a mercurial kind of guy. And he'd been through all of that. I must say the thing looked terrible to everybody. I'm not sure it looked terrible to him. He may have thought maybe this is the end of the Palestinian problem if Sharon does it right. And that's a real misreading of history that you can kill an idea with a bullet. You can kill people with a bullet, an idea you can't- Palestinian nationalism is a strong idea. But nevertheless, I think he may have been tempted in those early hours. Because the Israelis were saying totally surgical peace for Galilee, 40 kms or whatever it was.

Q: The line kept moving.

CLUVERIUS: We didn't know until later of course that the Israeli government itself was being deceived by his intentions. He was actually preparing to engage the Syrians when he was saying publicly—that the last thing we want is to fight with the Syrians; would you Americans please tell the Syrians we have no designs on them; they should keep quiet. But he was intending to attack the Syrians in the Bekaa Valley all along. He wasn't telling his Prime Minister, he wasn't telling his Cabinet. There's good books by Israeli authors on this, I'm not the expert, I wasn't there firsthand. But I was reading the cables. Sam Lewis was reporting what the government was telling him. think what happened is that the tensions of managing this crisis; I think Haig definitely want to manage this to a successful outcome. To prove that he, not these characters around the President, was the brain. He was the guy to help the President run foreign policy and he didn't trust what he had been heard to call the Neanderthals in the White House. I mean not the President but some of these other guys.

Q: Who was the National Security Advisor?

CLUVERIUS: Judge Clark, Bill Clark. So there was quite a bit of that tension in the air. Anyway what happened when I took my briefing materials back across the street; he didn't want me to leave then; he didn't want me to go with him to brief the President or the National Security Advisor; I don't know if they got briefed that night. I really don't know. He may have just gone and didn't want me around, or didn't need a map or whatever, I don' know. He may have gone in there and did a very fine job but I just don't know. But all of this was piling up and of course the Saudis threw their Embassy in London all over us. They were trying to send Prince Saud Bin Faisal, the Foreign Minister who's still the Foreign Minister, to represent the Arab view of- this disaster. Whether it was a formal Arab league mandate or just a bunch of people who had quickly agreed that the Saudis would do that, the Egyptians or others. And of course you can imagine the Egyptians were on the horn saying, my God how can this Treaty survive this kind of activity. And the Egyptians of course being very, very exposed here. I mean everybody's saying they'd been had twice. Because it was just after a meeting between Begin and Sadat at the summit that the Israelis had gone in and hit the Iraqi reactor in the Spring of' '81 and the Egyptian felt misused there, that that was a misuse of Sadat. And now here again weeks after the completion of' the withdrawal and the establishment of the full peace, and its territorial terms of the Sinai, the Israelis go off and start a war in Lebanon.

Q: They used the Treaty to get the Egyptian army off their back so they can concentrate everything on...

CLUVERIUS: You know the Egyptians were going bananas. It really was quite horrendous. Of course I was getting phone calls from back in Washington. What was the Secretary doing, they're getting cables from the party, they're getting cables back in Washington, I was trying to be a traffic cop and at the same time keep up so I could brief the Secretary and whoever else he wanted me to brief. I couldn't get an answer out of him about seeing the Saudi envoy, the Saudi Foreign Minister, while we were in Windsor. I

guess we stayed there, what 2 nights? Anyway the next day, whatever that visit to Windsor which is quite a whirl in my mind, we were off to Bonn and I was on the second plane. The sons-of-guns lost my bag. I'm on Air Force 2 or whatever it is and they lose my suitcase. We get to Bonn and at this point the boss agreed to see the Saudi, in Bonn. The Saudis were still raising hell and of course it looked like the 401cms scenario was nonsense. They were starting to move and to engage Syrians. I think at some point here Phil Habib was about to be launched again to try to put things back together, whatever. Saud Bin Faisal came to Bonn, he's a man with a real sense of theater. Very few outsiders, non-NATO people, are allowed into the complex used for major events. Saud came sweeping up, I met him at the door, I knew him slightly but only slightly, and of course he looked like his father, King Faisal, tall and thin, he looked like a desert hawk. He had on a full regalia. His face was like steel and he swept through the corridors. All the secretaries and everybody oohing and aahing at this tall desert warrior, as we were sweeping through. So he sat down with Haig and I and then Haig took him into the President without me. Haig was mostly pouring syrup on the guy, don't worry it's going to be all right but you really can't have all this terrorism- It was not a persuasive presentation and the President wasn't very persuasive either because Saud was mad as hell when he left. I took him out to the car. He was clearly upset with what he heard and felt that it was not a very well done con job of which he had just been the recipient. That evening I did some more papers, did some more reporting, read some things and tried to keep up with this business. But of course a lot of this was going by telephone, by secure phone, Sam Lewis to the Secretary, Nick Veliotes in Washington. By 9 at night it was raining like hell and I got a call to go out and see the Secretary at the Schloss where they were staying. It was where the President was staying, the National Security Advisor, the Secretary of State and their wives were staying at this castle outside of Bolin. So a driver showed up and off I went to go out there. So I get out there about 9:45 at night, raining like crazy. The autobahn scared the death out of me, white knuckles all the way. And there were two castles, there was kind of a guest/gate house which would be about the size of a large 15-room American house, you know. And inside was this great castle and I think it was inside the great castle was where

the President was. Haig was in this smaller palatial place there. There were a couple of secretaries on duty, there's always a little secretariat wherever the Secretary is, A couple of secretaries on duty from the 7th floor, the traveling staff, one staff aide and me and that was it. Haig had obviously been on the phone, he wanted a certain kind of cable sent. The kind of cable that really nobody should want to send. It contains things that you don't want on the record, bad tone, insulting things, the kind that I thought the Secretary, who was obviously upset and angry with the White House staff maybe with Judge Clark, should not send. He wanted to send a cable to tell Sam Lewis and the Israelis—don't worry, I'm handling it, everything's fine, don't get upset. It was the kind of thing you really don't want to have on the record the next morning if you know what I mean. So I tried to cool it by saying, Mr. Secretary do you really want to say that and I think we can say this in a fashion that would be better received.

Q: Particularly for the historian looking at this later on. Could you go a little more about what the tone was? I mean, what don't you want to say?

CLUVERIUS: The tone was basically—nobody else knows what he's doing; I'm in charge here; god dammit if you want to throw a little credit in some other direction that's fine but make sure that they understand that Al Haig is going to solve this problem—that kind of thing.

Q: It almost sounds like a repeat of what he did when President Reagan was shot.

CLUVERIUS: Yeah, it was that kind of tone. The substance of the message really concerned what Lewis should say to Begin in the next meeting an hour or so away, something like that. Al Haig was saying basically—you tell him this is what the President wants but you make sure he understands where it is it's coming from.

Q: You think there was a problem of communication. That people from the White House staff were calling too to Lewis?

CLUVERIUS: I don't think so but I don't know. I don't think Judge Clark would work that way and also I don't think they knew the players or the issues that well, to tell you the truth.

Q: It was Haig wanting to show that he was in charge.

CLUVERIUS: He'd obviously had some difficult phone calls. This was a period when there was tension between the Secretary and the White House staff. I mean the White House thinking that Haig was never a good team player. And Al Haig thinking that a lot of the people around the President were amateurs. So that was all in the air. We were using a dining room and there were sliding doors between where the secretaries worked and this dining room table where I was working and the staff aide was working. The secretary was coming in and out. His quarters were upstairs. He very kindly offered a drink. He was called away to the phone which he took upstairs out of our hearing although there was a phone in that room. Anyway, he took it upstairs during which time I tried to write the substance of what he wanted to say in a different way. That would be a nicer cable for him to look at in the morning and say I'm glad I sent that rather than Jesus why'd I send that. Of course I'm not sure he really cared. But anyway, that's what professionals are supposed to do. And he came back downstairs and said he had just been talking to Begin. And he was quite euphoric. He said the whole thing is over, I've just settled this issue with Begin. It really wasn't clear to me or to the staff aide, whom I won't name, he's still doing very nicely in the Service. We agreed after the fact that we wouldn't name each other as present that night. But he was very euphoric, the Secretary. And it wasn't clear what about. Mr. Secretary, what was it the Prime Minister said'? It may have been, this record would be harder to trace, but it may have been that point in time when Begin, apparently in total honesty because he was being deceived by Sharon, had sent Phil (Habib) off to see the Syrians. To tell the Syrians—hey, we don't want to want any part of a war with you—kind of thing. And maybe Haig thinks he got that out of Begin to give to Phil. And of course it was a total falsity because Sharon was bound and determined to go after the Syrians and he did so soon after. It may have been that point. But anyway I

couldn't get it out of him really what he was so euphoric about. But he was very euphoric after this discussion on the phone with Begin. He then called in one of the secretaries and dictated a note which said—Dear Bill, do not do anything until you talk to me, Al. He said I want that pinned to Judge Clark's pillow tonight. The President and Clark were apparently out somewhere, I don't know. But anyway, later on we did some other cables. I did other kinds of cables, more routine stuff and the other cable I was trying to mold a little bit didn't get sent because apparently this phone call had made it unnecessary. Later in the evening, another hour later, when wrapping things up, the Secretary put his head through the door and said—Please get me the President through the phone in here. This is now around 12:30/1 in the morning. The girl came back and said—the Secret Service said the President has retired. Haig blew up and said, “I didn't ask to speak to the goddamn secret service. I didn't ask whether the President was asleep or not. I want to talk to him. “ So he had the President on the phone. At this point the staff aide and I wished we weren't in the room. We don't want to be around when political types at that level are going to have a shouting match. But that's what happened in the half of the conversation I heard. Al Haig really very upset. Saying, “I'm the only one who knows what's going on around here. I've solved this problem. We're going to settle this when we get back to Washington, Mr. President. And I thought to myself, I really don't know how one talks to the President when you're Secretary of State but I don't think you can get away for long talking to the President that way.

Q: The way Ivan set the scene, there's a phone upstairs and a phone downstairs, was this a bit of, I won't say posturing. He wanted to really, show you who was in charge and van happened to be the only audience around

CLUVERIUS: I don't know because I don't know the man's psychology that well.

Q: You know it smacks a little of that.

CLUVERIUS: Also it may have been because he had a secure phone upstairs; he didn't have one in the dining room. 'There may have been one in the secretaries' room. Who knows. But that was really kind of Al Haig, really sounding off to the President in a way that I thought I didn't want to be there. I thought to myself, maybe that's the way these 2 gentlemen routinely do business but I rather doubted it.

Q: This is October 29, 1992. To explain what was on the last tape since it's been many months since we last had this interview. You were saying that Alexander Haig was on the telephone to the President. Really chewing out, you know screaming and yelling to the President, about 2:00 in the morning in a German castle, about the situation in Lebanon, Israel and all that.

CLUVERIUS: I guess before we got to that point, you must have been listening to it, I explained how we got there. And that Haig had called me out of the hotel in Bad Godesberg to go to this castle which was about 40 minutes away. And of course there were tots of phoning going on; obviously, I didn't know anything about what was passing between Haig and Sam Lewis in Tel Aviv, Begin. Of course the Israelis at the time were still pushing the idea, the fiction that this was a limited intervention ... of course Sharon had been deceiving, probably Begin himself, and was really pushing to engage the Syrians regardless of the public statements of intent. Haig was very . excited, very excitable about trying to put this thing back together again. He wanted to send off some rather ill considered cables which he told me to write. I tried to write them so that they'd look proper on the record, so to speak. He went upstairs at one point. Came back down and said he'd talked to Begin on the phone. Everything was all right, he had certain assurances, no thanks to anybody else. He, Al Haig, had done it. He then wanted to talk to the President. The Secret Service had told him the President was asleep. He said I don't give a damn, I want to talk to him. This must have been after midnight, sometime between 12 and 1:30/2. He was telling the President he had talked to Begin. The Israelis were giving him assurances on this and that. He was the only guy the President had who knew what he

was doing, Then he called, this was in a kind of a dining room which was the command post for the Secretary, at this hour there was just me and this one staff aide. There were some sliding doors on the other side of which were a couple of late-night secretaries. They couldn't really hear what was going on in this room, fortunately. He even asked one of them to come in and dictated a note which he said he wanted to pin to the pillow of the National Security Adviser, Bill Clark. I'm trying to think of the sequence of events. I think we had already seen the Saudi Foreign Minister. He had already been in and out. So this was very near the end of the visit to Bonn. There was a certain, at least as far as the Secretaries party went, there was a certain lull in the action so to speak on the Lebanon question which was what I was there for. And I think the next day was the end of that Presidential visit. At that point, substantively I have a hard time now remembering exactly how we were on the ground in Lebanon at that point. But I think we were at the point of having accepted some of these assurances. Which historically now we know that Begin may have given in all honesty but his Minister of Defense, Sharon, was doing something quite different. Then the President and the Secretary and everybody departed in a horrendous rain storm at the airport. And since I'd been a late addition to the party, not catching them until Wimbledon, after Paris. I didn't have a seat on these airplanes.

Q: One question before we take you out of Germany, the substance of this telephone call that you got. The one-sided one that you were trying hard not to hear where the President was woken up. What was Haig trying to impart to the President?

CLUVERIUS: He was really imparting that he, Al Haig, had fixed it. He was the only one who could possibly have done so. And that he was the only one that the President had who knew what he was doing on the senior...

Q: Wasn't this embarrassing? Not just embarrassing to hear the language but I assume you felt that this was taking a lot more credit for something that lie probably didn't have.

CLUVERIUS: Ultimately of course he was wrong anyway, it didn't work out that way. I think everybody could hear the little rumblings in the background. I think Haig was already in very deep trouble with the White House and with the advisers around the President. Whom Al Haig used to call “Neanderthals. “ I think this whole thing was just a bitter piece of a much larger set of unhappiness both with the Reagan people with Al Haig not being a team player and all of that, and Al Haig with them. But it was serious enough that I thought as I went back to the hotel that night or the next morning. I went to the airport to wave “bye-bye” but it was serious enough that I thought either the President was about to give up foreign policy to a Secretary of State or he was going to have to fire the guy. And it was serious enough that at the end of the evening, the one other person in the room, the staff aide, we agreed that we would keep this one under our hats for a decade or so. But it was very painful. Then one of the administrative guys, SSEX or someone, said that they could find me a seat on the 2nd plane going back. I said, no thank you very much, I don't think I want to go back right now. And I stayed on until I could get a commercial flight back from Frankfurt. Which turned out to be very nice. Because Arthur Burns, the Ambassador, apparently out of his own pocket, I don't know, after the presidential hoopla had left town, rented a Rhine River barge boat cruiser and gave a big party for his staff with dinner and dancing on the Rhine. And the rain cleared up and it was a lovely evening.

Q: This is, thank god the wheels are up.

CLUVERIUS: Yeah, the “wheels are up” party. I joined that, had a nice time and the next day I flew back to Washington. To find out basically that things were very very bad. That the Lebanon thing was going to hell. That it was getting increasingly clear that the Israeli intentions were greater than those stated. Remember it was Called “Operation Peace for Galilee. “ They said they were only going to go 25 kms.

Q: They kept drawing red lines.

CLUVERIUS: Yeah, they kept drawing lines and say—we have no intention of going any further than this. No intention to engage the Syrians if they stay out of it. And of course, I believe the United States probably passed assurances to the Syrians of that. Of course Sharon intended to engage the Syrians and very shortly began to do so.

Q: What were you getting from our Embassy in Lebanon. Bob ? was the Ambassador at that time wasn't he? And from Sam Lewis? Not just them but from their staffs, were they beginning to smell a very large rat in this whole thing?

CLUVERIUS: The point at which anybody began to smell a rat, I really can't fix for you in time. I think it was definitely after Bonn. But then again I may be speaking only for myself. Because once I got back into the bureau, this was not my normal responsibility, I was doing the peace process. And of course had joined the President's party because they canceled our meetings when the Israelis invaded. Which I probably put on the tape somewhere. So once I got back into the Department, there's a whole different set of players doing the Lebanon thing.

Q: What was the mood? You were in Near Eastern Affairs.

CLUVERIUS: The mood was terrible. This whole thing. There was a great deal of pressure being put on the Egyptians. On the one side by the Arabs that this was a good occasion to abrogate that horrible separate treaty. And of course by the Americans, British and I think almost everybody else with any sense to the Egyptians to—Keep your cool. Of course the Egyptians didn't break off relations with the Israelis. They didn't do anything as a matter of fact until the massacre was revealed sometime later; the massacre at Shabra and Shatila Camps, but then that was some months later. Then they withdrew their Ambassador. That was all they did which I thought was reflective of a maturity, a diplomatic judgment that was very impressive actually.

Q: Would you explain what the massacre was.

CLUVERIUS: That took place, this is all June in Bonn and all of that. By the time the massacre took place, which was in September of '82, In between, of course, Haig had been fired. Larry Eagleburger was then Under Secretary for Political Affairs, but was really kind of running things. Of course Shultz was named. At that time there were a number of people who were probably very close to being fired by Haig. One of which I think was Roy Atherton and another may have been Nick Veliotes. For some reason Haig just didn't like Roy, thought that Roy didn't understand the Egyptians.

Q: He was the Ambassador to Egypt.

CLUVERIUS: In fact the day when Haig was fired or resigned, whatever we want to call it. I think he was fired. Bill Kirby, who is now President of AFSA, and I were having lunch across the street and they usually have the TV on. It came on and we quickly finished up our lunch. Haig had resigned. We went back to the Department and the Assistant Secretary Nick Veliotes was going up and down the halls in NEA to every office saying: I don't want to hear any cheers, no laughter, no champagne corks in this bureau.

Q: This gives a feeling for how things were.

CLUVERIUS: Everybody keep your cool and Larry Eagleburger was the senior professional around. During that transition he was scrupulous as to who's ever coming in, or when Shultz comes in, after Shultz had been named, has to know that this Department behaves professionally and is ready to carry out the Secretary's wishes, the President's wishes. That the Department isn't the partisan here.

Q: Just to get a feel. You were talking to the President of AFSA which is our union, the Foreign Service protective association. With Haig, what was the impression? Did Haig himself, because of his Middle Eastern thing or was it soil of general. That he just wasn't doing a good job. What was the problem with Haig?

CLUVERIUS: I think in the Near Eastern bureau at least there was a strong feeling that Haig was very much intrigued by the strategic theories of Arik Sharon. That Haig saw riding the Israeli horse, taking a very pro-Israeli stance could advance his accomplishments as Secretary and maybe carry him beyond Secretary of State.

Q: Because he did run for President later on.

CLUVERIUS: And he thought a very pro-Israeli stance would help. And he brought a very pro-Israeli staff with him as Secretary when he first came in. Picked them up from a think tank in Philadelphia. He had Woody Goldberg and Harvey, what's his name—a strange name, an interesting character. Sicherman. But he had a very strong pro-Israeli tilt. There's some feeling of course that he may have given Sharon at least the yellow light for that invasion. I think in other areas, I think other people had different experiences with Haig as the Secretary.

Q: So we're really talking, at least from your perspective, it was the NEA bureau thinking—my God, at last we're, you know—they were happy to see him go. Others?

CLUVERIUS: I don't know. You must be doing other people who worked in AF, ARA and that sort of thing. Maybe they have a different perspective. Some people, I think in the EUR bureau, thought that he was a pretty capable guy. He had that NATO experience which from the European point of view, a few European diplomats and colleagues I'd talked to about it thought he was doing a pretty good job in that role. Maybe the Secretary of State thing was over his head. I don't know but certainly he conducted a very simplistic approach to the complex problems that NEA contains. And other people in other bureaus probably had different experiences with him.

Q: What were you doing. Here is this nasty war was going on. The Israelis were moving farther and farther and eventually essentially went all the way up to Beirut.

CLUVERIUS: Yeah, after many assurances that they had no intention of doing what they proceeded to do. Of course they were bombing Beirut. They tried very hard apparently to get Arafat with some smart bombs and things.

Q: At least this Israeli complicity at a certain level, they had a responsibility for some horrible massacres over at the refugee camps.

CLUVERIUS: Sure. And of course Shultz came in right in the middle of this mess. In his confirmation hearings, he took some heat up in the Hill from Senators sympathetic to the Israeli positions. His long association with the Arab world through the Bechtel Corp. Shultz came into office very conscious of that. He was very scrupulous about, because a lot of the Arab people he knew were calling him on the phone. He kept that at arms length. Of course he had this horrible mess to deal with and not long into that while people were wrestling with the... By this time of course the Assistant Secretary, Nick Veliotes, was exhausted over fighting with Haig over the Middle Eastern issues. I think that if Haig had stayed, Nick would have been gone. He was pretty tired out. While the desks and these folks were wrestling with the day-to-day problems of the Lebanon situation, the emerging strategic vision of Sharon starting to be seen on the ground increasingly, you know—We won't go there, we won't go here, we won't bomb Beirut. They went there, they went here, they bombed Beirut. We have no intention of going into Beirut, they went into Beirut. All of that working on a day-to-day basis in a crisis kind of atmosphere. Which is where Shultz came in. Basically the guy that really began to run NEA as far as Lebanon was concerned was Charlie Hill, the Director of the Israeli desk. He was the one on the phone with Habib, remember Phil Habib was in play then, from very early in the summer. This was probably end of July now. Phil Habib was in play and saw this thing on the field. And the day-to-day secure phone calls between Phil and the Department were run by Charlie Hill. I think you can read about that period in Charlie's little memoir of Phil Habib that was published in the Foreign Service Journal after Phil's recent death. Some people thought that the Assistant Secretary, Nick, had abrogated the Bureau to Charlie Hill. But at the same time all this

operational stuff was going on, Lebanon wasn't the only problem. Shultz got a small group together. He wanted what it would take to re-launch the wider peace process. Let's look beyond this Lebanon thing, let's handle this as an operational disaster, crisis, whatever. Let's look beyond it and do it very, very quietly with only a few people involved. We started to do that. In fact there were two groups. There was some pressure for the Pentagon to be involved and there was a guy over there. Of course there was a so-called Special Envoy, Richard Fairbanks on the scene. But Shultz really wanted a very small internal group. But there was a larger group that was not to know there was an internal group. What would it really take to engage King Hussein. Of course at this point King Hussein had not given up his claim to the occupied West Bank. What would it really take to engage Hussein. Basically about 4 of us wrote what became known as the “Reagan Initiative” which was launched September 1 '82.

Q: Who were the four?

CLUVERIUS: Myself, Ned Walker, Bill Kirby, Bob Ames of the CIA and, later, Charlie Hill, as a very fine wordsmith to put the polishing touches on the actual speech. But at first we just did the substance. Ned and I took the first crack at it at my house in Annapolis one Sunday afternoon. We just sat down in my house and began writing. Nick Veliotes was involved as Assistant Secretary. Dan Kurzer, Dan I don't think was back there at the time. But Allen Kreczko, the lawyer from “L” was in on it, an extraordinarily bright and interesting guy. That was about it, there were only about 4 or 5 of us. And basically what I did was take an old speech I had done. Haig had wanted to shake up the Middle East and wanted to give a speech at the end of May, this is going back a little bit, in Chicago. The speech would really have some substance and all of that. I was suppose to do substantive drafting and Harvey Sicherman, this is the other guy that he brought with him from that Philadelphia think tank, was to do the polishing. Well what happened was I wrote a rather forward looking speech and Harvey just took out all the substance and did all the polishing. Haig gave the speech at the end of May in Chicago at the Council of Foreign Relations or something and no one paid any attention because there was nothing in it. But I had

held on to my earlier drafts of that. And we, Ned and I, sat down and tried to figure out what would engage, what would be interesting enough to the Arab side to get this thing restarted after the Israeli invasion. That's basically the substance that is still there in the Reagan Initiative of September 1, '82. And we vetted that through Shultz. The President was in California and he gave the speech from California, I believe, making a few last minute fiddlings of his own. Which didn't really affect the substance very much. At the same time there would been a long standing plan, not long standing but weeks, for Cap Weinberger to go out to the area.

Q: He's the Secretary of Defense.

CLUVERIUS: Right. He was going to go out to Lebanon. Because by that time we had the marines in there, at port, by the end of August.

Q: This is the first. This is in order to protect the Palestinians who were evacuated.

CLUVERIUS: Right. They were then well on their way. The marines were at the port area. The French were upon the Green line near the museum. The Italians had their headquarters in a school. So Weinberger was to go and I was to go with him. When Cabinet Secretaries travel, they usually have someone from State as kind of their Political Advisor or whatever. So I was to go with Weinberger. He knew nothing of the impending initiative. Right when he was going to land in Israel, the President was going to give a speech that the Israelis would not like at all.

Q: The fact that the speech was tightly held. So even Weinberger didn't know this.

CLUVERIUS: No, he didn't know anything about it, he didn't know anything about anybody even trying to do this. Let alone that the President was going to do it. So I asked Shultz: If I'm going to go with the Secretary when do I brief him on the speech, he obviously has to know. Will you brief him before we leave? He said: Nope, I don't want anybody to know. You can brief him after the “wheels up” at Andrews Air Force Base. You can brief him and

if he wishes you can brief his number 2 guy who was with him. Fred Ickle who was Under Secretary of Defense for Policy or something. A rather strange but interesting character, actually. So I wanted till airborne and they were going to serve us some drinks and they were going to serve us dinner. And I told the military assistant to the Secretary of Defense that I did have a special briefing, one-on-one, that I had been instructed by the Secretary of State to give to the Secretary of Defense. So I went in and went through the speech with him. I had a text with me, there were a few changes still being made, I think in California. But when it was going to be made and what the impact would probably be. And he didn't see it. He didn't see the impact at all. He said there's nothing terribly new in here. And of course there was quite a bit that was new. There were also some older things that were restated and repackaged.

Q: Also his assistant?

CLUVERIUS: They didn't see it. I said this is going to raise hell with Begin. I even pointed to the lines in the speech that would probably give severe heartburn to the Israelis. But he didn't quite see it. We landed first in Beirut. No, we didn't land in Beirut. How did we do that'? I'm trying to recall. We went by helicopters from the aircraft carrier and we switched to small aircraft. I think we landed in Cyprus. The small aircraft flew out to an aircraft carrier and then we took helicopters to Beirut. Phil Habib was there at the residence.

Q: Did he know about the speech?

CLUVERIUS: He didn't know and I was allowed to brief him. We did our bit with the Secretary of Defense and visited the marines and all of that. Then we went up to the residence. Then the Secretary was going to see whatever local dignitary, the President or whatever. The Ambassador went with him, I didn't have any need to go. And I said Phil, you're not going'? And he said—No, I don't need to go to this one. And I said well I've got something I've got to tell you. And he took a piece of hide off of me. He said—Why didn't I know that. It's a major initiative in the Middle East and I'm the Special Envoy. Why didn't

I know? And I said—Phil, the Secretary didn't want anybody to know it. The President is going to make the speech tomorrow just as we're leaving here and getting down to Israel. He said—My God there'll be hell to pay. I said, yeah but Weinberger doesn't see it. He took a strip off my hide. He said-You guys should have told me. Did Charlie Hill know? I said of course Charlie knew. And of course he was on the secure phone daily with Charlie Hill. So he was also pissed at Charlie. He was mad that he wasn't in on it.

Q: Just to put this in emphasis. Secretary Shultz was pretty new on the scene.

CLUVERIUS: Yes, a matter of weeks.

Q: One reason that might be put for doing this, he didn't really know the people involved as well. So perhaps he didn't feel as comfortable as he might have to know who were the major players. Would you say this might be a factor?

CLUVERIUS: Sure. But I think also he'd been around, you know. He'd been OMB, Secretary of Treasury and this sort of thing. So he knew how to behave in Washington. If you wanted to keep something secret. I think he also wanted to have a complete package. You could ask Charlie Hill this. Is Charlie doing this'?

Q: No, where is he now?

CLUVERIUS: Well he retired and went with Shultz to Stanford. Because he was the insider next to Shultz as you'll occasionally read in the paper about Shultz's notebooks. Well those were all Charlie's notebooks. We used to joke that Charlie probably wrote down those in little thin notebooks what time he brushed his teeth everyday, you know. But Charlie became the right-hand man of Shultz through the whole 6 years or so of Shultz's tenure as Secretary of State. But I think he wanted to have a real package to sell to the President. And the people around the President. I mean, he was not well liked by the conservative part of the Republican party. Mr. Shultz was seen as maybe not a real Reagan believer or team player, who knows. He obviously thought he had to keep this one a real secret

to persuade the President and the National Security Adviser on his own that here was what you need to do Mr. President to fix the Middle East. Because I think there was a lot of political fear that they would lose the one major foreign policy achievement of the Carter administration which was the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty.

Q: So you're at the point where you told Habib. This is before you went to Beirut.

CLUVERIUS: We're in Beirut.

Q: I mean before you went to Israel.

CLUVERIUS: Yeah. The next day we went to Israel and here was the speech about to be given. And Sam Lewis had been told by Charlie Hill on the phone by the time I we got down to Tel Aviv, I believe. And of course Begin was furious when they were given the text. Because the President was speaking almost co-terminously with our arrival in Israel. And Sam probably can give an accurate look at that. As to the precise timing. But it really did send the Israelis up. Probably to Weinberger's surprise because he didn't see the novelty in it at all. And then when I get back to the Department.

Q: Were you getting any flak from the Israelis while you were there? Were you there long enough?

CLUVERIUS: Oh yeah, there was a lot of flak. Then I think Weinberger caught some of it. Sam caught some of it. The face-to-face meeting with Begin I didn't go to because I had a badly hurt leg, I had burned it on my son's motorcycle the day before we left for this trip or a couple of days before. And it was really, it got infected, burned. The Air Force doctor traveling with Weinberger was treating it for me but it was a super, aching nasty business. And that morning meeting with Begin I did not go to. I had to see this guy and change bandages and everything in the Hilton Hotel in Tel Aviv. When we got back from that a couple of days later, that little circuit, the bureau was exhausted. Charlie was really

running things to a large extent and either had left NEA to become Shultz' right-hand or was about to do so.

Q: Just back up a bit. When you were in Beirut, the American marines, the Italians and French were there to protect part of the truce agreement to allow the PLO or the Palestinians, to evacuate their fighters. And we were helping with that and putting troops in place so that it could be done.

CLUVERIUS: Around the port. They're supposed to be there not more than 10 days or something.

Q: This is what I wanted to ask you. What was the feeling there. Because this became very important later on. Because we went back in. I mean, was the idea that this insertion of our allied troops made sense that time for that purpose.

CLUVERIUS: Well the President had agreed to put them in there. It was 10 days to cover this evacuation basically. There was a disagreement I think between Phil Habib and Weinberger. Weinberger thought they ought to come out right on the dot or earlier if possible, whatever the time limit was. I think they did come out a couple of days earlier out of the port. I think Phil disagreed with that. That was premature and of course then they were later put back in near the airport. To that disastrous location.

Q: Did you get involved at all in that?

CLUVERIUS: No.

Q: Where did that decision, did you have any feel, since you were in NEA, where that decision to put the marines back- in the airport. Because that didn't make sense really.

CLUVERIUS: It didn't make a lot of sense. And that's something—where the decision really came. Of course Phil can't answer anymore and Charlie Hill would probably be the most authoritative source. And of course Shultz himself. Putting the marines back in there.

And in between, now here's the date I can't recall, and it's a little bit important to Shultz's development as Secretary, I think. When the Embassy was blown up the first time.

Q: It was the date of April 18, 1983 when the Embassy was ... that was the one that killed so many people.

CLUVERIUS: That was the one that killed a man whom Shultz had come to like and trust quite a bit. Who gradually became part of the Middle East inner circle around Shultz. Which was Bob Ames, who was then what they call an 10 for the Middle East within the Agency.

Q: He was with the Central Intelligence Agency and he was sort of the expert.

CLUVERIUS: Yeah, and he just happened to be there in Beirut when that thing was blown. They were having some kind of meetings there, so a bunch of people were killed. That hurt Shultz a lot. He really liked Bob. And of course Bob left 6 kids. That was a serious blow. But he was, even soon after Shultz took over, obviously the NIO would brief the Secretary of State and that kind of thing. He really liked Bob and Bob was in some of the more sensitive drafting. And I'd known Bob a long time. A wonderful guy. When that happened in April that bothered Shultz and he didn't -like the next 10 very much who was Graham Fuller. Who was also an old friend of mine. But Bob, he really had a lot of confidence in Bob's judgment and all of that. I think he also, as he was new in the Department, the idea of someone he liked and trusted from outside the Department is kind of a reality check to make sure that these guys he didn't know very well, like myself, were on the right track for him. But he also came to like the man very much, I think.

Q: During this time you came back and you were in charge of the Peace Process but the Peace Process was already on the back burner, on hold, or whatever you want to call it.

CLUVERIUS: At that time, the Reagan Initiative was aimed at the Peace Process as much or more than it was aimed at Lebanon- There was a genuine policy dispute, if

you wish to call it that. Where knowledgeable and responsible people on both sides of the question really felt strongly that one way was the way to go and the other people felt equally strongly that another way was the way to go. And that was really: What did you put first? You put Lebanon first and by helping sort out that mess you then clear the way for the Peace Process to be restarted. And that was one side of the argument. Put Lebanon first. The other side of the argument was put Lebanon aside, keep working on it. But don't give it your top priority, your top attention, go right into the substance of the Reagan Initiative and pursue the wider Peace Process. And the more successful you are in that area, Lebanon will fall into place more easily. Since Lebanon and its problems are a symptom more than a cause of the problems in the region. What happened in that is that the people who wanted to put Lebanon first, won the argument. I was on the other side of that argument. It was a fair and legitimate policy dispute I suppose. But the idea of putting Lebanon first and then switch your attention to the Peace Process unfortunately soon became exaggerated. It didn't become just Lebanon first and the Peace Process later. There were people who became very much enamored of the idea that the Reagan administration could use the invasion of Lebanon to produce the second Arab-Israel Treaty. Lebanon and Israel. So instead of just dealing with the Lebanon problem as a way to clear the underbrush so you could get back to the main Peace Process, they folded the Peace Process into Lebanon. Let's get another Peace Treaty. And that's where I really parted company with the philosophy and a lot of us did. But Charlie and the Secretary were persuaded. I think the White House liked it. A lot of energy was put into it. Phil was involved and of course Phil was then given a senior kind of field manager to conduct this, which was Morris Draper. Who's also on that, they're all on that—they got enamored of this idea that you could produce another Arab-Israeli Treaty. This would be a real feather in the cap of the Administration. It would happen relatively early in the tenure of Secretary of State Shultz. And I think a lot of us felt that that was a bummer. It was a bad idea because Lebanon wasn't free to make any Peace Treaty. Lebanon is not a free and sovereign state now, it certainly wasn't then.

Q: It wasn't really an Arab state in a way.

CLUVERIUS: That's right, there's enough anomalies in the Lebanon structure.

Q: Tribal problems.

CLUVERIUS: Tribal problems and all of that. But there was a lot of arguing about it and it went that way. And of course the Israelis were pushing this. There were some Israelis that had learned their lessons about this Lebanon thing, including the Israeli that's now running their Lebanon bilateral peace talks. Yuri Lubrani, who was kind of the High Commissioner of Israel in Lebanon when all their troops were there. It was Lubrani. But you know the Israelis have been playing this game with the Christians a long time. Begin was fascinated by the idea of using the Christians, to protecting those nice Christian boys up there, to force a treaty. The Israelis, they're all deluded. I mean Lebanon is a place full of illusions and people fell into that trap. Thinking that the Lebanese could make a separate treaty the way Egypt did. As if Lebanon had the kind of sovereignty, kind of standing that Egypt did as a country. And it was just, you know, I didn't want any part of it. And they chased it around. Remember they got the Lebanese to meet the Israelis at Naqurah and various places. They had working groups and they developed the beginnings of what was a framework of an actual treaty. And of course the Lebanese just kept dragging it out. They had no intention of signing any goddamn thing. And eventually it all went away. There was an agreement that was made, in May of '83, but it was never implemented. The Syrians just told the Lebanese quietly—Forget it, you can't do that. And of course the Lebanese knew it all along. That came a complete cropper. A lot of time and psychic energy was wasted on-trying to make another peace treaty in the Middle East. With Lebanon of all places. With the Syrians and the Israelis in occupation. The Shiites getting increasingly restless, the largest minority with the smallest share of the economic pie. It wasn't a country that could make a peace treaty. And then of course you had the assassination of one President of Lebanon and the replacement by his brother and all of that. But it all dragged on all through that winter of '82/'83. At that point I was getting ready to bail out

of there anyway. I'd been back really working full time on Peace Process issues since September '78, when I came back from Bahrain, and it was time to leave. And I looked around and there was some discussion of sending me to either Damascus or Khartoum or something. And I said no. I said I wanted to go to Jerusalem. That job was coming open, I really wanted that. For professional reasons but also for personal reasons. Damascus didn't have a decent American school beyond 8th grade, didn't have any beyond 8th grade. And I had a daughter who was going into high school, my son was just going into college. So I asked for the job of Consulate General in Jerusalem. I always thought it was one of the most interesting jobs in the business. And I went out there in July of '83.

Q: You were therefrom July of '83 until when?

CLUVERIUS: Well I was there formally from July '83 and I moved out of there in January of '86. But I really changed jobs in September of '85.

Q: What was the situation? Could you, for the record, explain what does the Consul General do in Jerusalem? It stands by itself, it's unique.

CLUVERIUS: Yeah it stands by itself because the original UN resolution of November '47 which partitioned Palestine into a Jewish and Arab state called for the “Internationalization of Jerusalem.” Then of course that partition never took place according to the UN mandate because the Jew,.; of Palestine accepted it very reluctantly but accepted it. But the Arabs didn't. They went to war against the new Israeli state. Just hours after the British left in middle of May 1948. In fact the Western world maintained its position that Jerusalem should have a special status and therefore never recognized Israeli sovereignty in West Jerusalem or Jordanian sovereignty in East Jerusalem, as it was divided from '48 to '67. And therefore the Consuls General in Jerusalem were independent. I think there are 7 in the Consular corps and they do not report through the Embassies in Tel Aviv and prior to '67 they didn't report through Amman, Jordan either. They were independent missions of their own. And there's the British, the French, the Americans, the Belgians, I believe

there's a Swedish guy but he may be Honorary, the Vatican representative there and a Greek and maybe one other. As far as the Americans go, the mandate is basically the West Bank and Jerusalem. After '67 it became the West Bank and Jerusalem. Before '67 it was just Jerusalem, both sides of Jerusalem, East and West. There was an office on both sides.

Q: You've been a real Near Eastern hand by this point, so it wasn't somebody coming up and saying—Wat we want you to do such and so—you knew what you were supposed (to do). What were sort of your instructions to yourself. What did -you put as your goal or what did you want to do while going out to Jerusalem.

CLUVERIUS: The Peace Process in a wider meaningful sense was still largely on hold, and was going to stay that way. They were still wrestling around with this vain attempt to make it a Treaty with Lebanon. And of course things were getting, by the time I was going out to Jerusalem, we'd had the explosion of the Embassy, we'd had all this nasty business with the marines, all of that. We had this nonsense of putting the battleship, New Jersey, off the coast of Lebanon lobbing 16-inch shells....

Q: 16-inch shells.

CLUVERIUS: Unbelievable stuff. You know I use to be a naval officer I know what 16 guns can do, you know. In fact my grandfather commanded 2 different battleships, the West Virginia and the Texas. I thought my job really was to talk turkey to the Palestinians so that they'd understand. I mean they're full of illusions and missed opportunities. As Abba Eban used to say—The Palestinians never missed an opportunity to miss an opportunity. A lot of truth in that. I think that's really what I wanted to do for the Palestinians. To tell them, you know, they've got to exert themselves, no one is going to do this for them. And basically they're going to have to pay some prices. That was really what it was all about.

Q: Well, tell me now, the very, important thing is that you are a self-sustained unit, at the head of a major mission in Jerusalem which had its own clients, you might say, the

Israelis. Very politically sensitive. You were also in a very politically sensitive position dealing with the Palestinians. If most American politicians had their way, they would just go away. They don't want to hear from them because there ain't no Palestinian vote and there certainly is a Jewish vote. What were your relations like with the Embassy, who was the Ambassador there?

CLUVERIUS: First it was Sam Lewis for my first year I guess. Then Sam retired and it was Tom Pickering. And of course I was also the first Consul General in Jerusalem that the Israelis knew from some other life—in the negotiations and I'd served in Israel years earlier. So I had pretty good credentials. I had a lot of Israeli friends and that kind of thing. So that made it different for the Israelis. They had a harder time being nasty to the Consul General because they knew him.

Q: Usually part of the modus operandi is to portray the Consul General as anti-Semitic, unfriendly to Israel, the whole thing.

CLUVERIUS: They couldn't really do that with me, they didn't try and of course the only Israeli officials of any kind that the Consuls General were accredited to is the Mayor of Jerusalem. Which is Teddy Kollek who is a wonderful man. And I had a lot of Israeli friends. I knew Israel well, I'd served there for 3 years prior. Sam, I got along with very well. There were times when Sam probably didn't like it that I had an independent input into things. But in fact we worked it out all very well and it was the same thing with Tom Pickering. He's one of the smoothest professionals, easy professional to work with that ever was. And I hope the rumors of his elevation are true, if there's a Clinton victory. But there's some very good rumors. So that worked out pretty well. We did use my house a lot in Jerusalem because the Israeli government is in Jerusalem, so Sam Lewis was up there all the time. And the guy was tired. I use to just tell him, anytime you come to the house, someone will get you a sandwich and you can flake out on the bed or the sofa which Sam would do. He was very tired of running up and down the hill all the time. I remember we had Bud McFarlane in the living room with Fairbanks, myself, Morris Draper,

all these people. Phil Habib would be through. Lots of arguing about what they were doing in Lebanon. I just said, I told McFarlane, the dumbest thing I ever heard was to put the New Jersey out there. That would not impress Hafez Al-Assad, he doesn't care. And all we did of course was rearrange some hilltops out there and some villages. But Assad wouldn't care if your targeting was perfect and you destroyed all the division of his troops. He didn't give a damn. I said, but if you wanted to impress him that you know the rules of- the game you're in, you'd clean out all those markings on one of those attack helicopters and go in and strafe the hell out of the Franjieh palace up in the hills behind Beirut. Because Franjieh is Assad's agent in Lebanon, the former President of Lebanon.

Q: Was he the Druze? He was the Maronite.

CLUVERIUS: He was one of the Maronite leaders. But he had long been a client of Assad's really. I said that would make Assad take notice, you'd be going after something he cares about. You strafe that little castle compound up there in the hills and it didn't matter if you hit anybody or not. Assad would know that you're in the same game he's in. But all this other nonsense. But there were a lot of arguments like that. So in that sense the Consul General's living room was a very good place to get messages, to sit down and have a drink, to get a sandwich. So there was a lot going on there that had nothing to do with being Consul General in Jerusalem. But it's also a marvelous job if you can stand the schizophrenia. Because you might spend lunch with a bunch of Israeli journalists and politicians, and in the evening talking over the same issues with Palestinians around your own dinner table. And you'd think you'd been on 2 different planets all day long. So you could really go to bed feeling schizophrenic.

Q: The Palestinians, it must be very difficult to get across what we're after with them. One, in a way particularly in the West Bank, they have to rely on us being the sort of the major person to maybe do something. Yet at the same time, every time they looked around we were in bed with the Israelis.

CLUVERIUS: It's hard for them. It's also they were very much in the mode of the Lebanese, the Greeks, the Cypriots and some others that everything bad that happens to them, it's somebody else's fault. They're very given to that syndrome. And if anything good is going to happen to them it'll be by someone else's efforts, not their own. Because they're not responsible. There's a lot of that syndrome there. I think it's obviously changed in recent years a bit. But then again there were a few brave souls out there. Mayor Freij, Elias Freij of Bethlehem, very outspoken. The Israelis were always trying to shut him up. The Palestinians were always trying to shut him up. But basically he was saying, almost 10 years ago, what the Palestinians now take as conventional wisdom. But in those days he was under some threat for speaking out very very candidly and honestly about what it was going to take. In other words, what kind of sacrifices are going to be necessary. And he's still in the game and he's one of the delegates on the Palestinian side. There were some others. But of course you also had the bombing of the Palestinian mayors in '81 I think.

Q: 3 or 4 had their legs blown off.

CLUVERIUS: Karim Khalaf later died of a heart attack, but Karim was quite a guy and after he had his legs mangled, not blown off, there was another one up in Neblus who had his legs blown off, he wouldn't deal with anybody. But Karim bad been badly hurt and had to use two canes, his legs were badly damaged. Most of the Consulates give 2 National Day parties, one for the Israeli side of town and one for the Arab side of town. And I didn't do that. I started to just give one. Hardly anybody came from the Arab side. But the next year I talked to Karim Khalaf who was basically under house arrest down in Jericho, whether he would come. He said, “No, no, I'm too embarrassed. “ I said, don't be silly, it's some Israelis who blew your legs off. You know, who blew you up. You come to the party, if anybody is going to be embarrassed it'll be the Israelis. And he didn't quite understand my thinking on that but he came. And hobbled around my garden with his two canes. Some of the Israelis present were embarrassed. Because by that time, this is now 2 years later, they had pretty well broken it and they knew it was done by Israelis. In fact it was done by

Israeli fanatics who had also let one of their own Druze sappers, who was killed or badly hurt, approach the bomb. They didn't tell the guy that he was about to get blown. So there was a lot of challenge in Jerusalem. It was a very interesting place. And it's one of the nicest houses in the Foreign Service.

Q: Did you feel bugged or under threat or anything like that?

CLUVERIUS: There were times when it was pretty nasty, I think. There were times when people felt there was a threat. And certainly that was the case just after I left that job. When the Intifada started in '87, I think there was a lot of security concern.

Q: I would have thought, I mean after all, you're talking about religious emotions and you have these, I don't come from the area, but you have these Israelis who were well into the settlement process. Many who came from a very right-wing and almost fanatical religious side and here the Consul General of Jerusalem is sort of the source of saying you're being nasty people and all. I would have thought this would have made you a target of religious fanaticism.

CLUVERIUS: I thought that you're probably in more danger from Jewish terrorists than an Arab one in that job. One, they're harder for the authorities to detect. And they are armed. The Israelis have had a hard time breaking into their own fanatical groups. They're very tight knit and all of that. So, yeah, I think it's probably a more serious danger.

Q: Today after a long pause this is the 25th of March 1994. Let's talk about, as we mentioned in this last tape, reporting. Obviously the human rights reports but there are other reports. Could you talk about what you were after, how you went about it and how these reports, your concerns, how they played at our Embassy in Tel Aviv, how they played back in Washington?

CLUVERIUS: Well you have to remember that Jerusalem is an independent post. So you didn't have to send things through the Embassy in Tel Aviv. But of course you were often

reporting on the same trends or singular events that the Embassy in Tel Aviv might be reporting one perspective and you might be reporting as a different kind of event. Because the Embassy in Tel Aviv was going to have their own interpretation but also the Israeli interpretation. And the Consulate General in Jerusalem might have its own interpretation and of course a Palestinian interpretation. So it could be difficult I should think if you didn't work closely with the Embassy. And we tended to do that, And there really wasn't that much occasion for conflict and conflicting views. Because in fact the turf is reasonably, recognizably separate. There is an awkwardness in a sense that the Embassy, traditionally since the '67 war, covered the Gaza Strip. Which of course is Palestinian in its political life and it's Palestinian in most of its human life. Although there are some native Gazans, maybe 100-150,000 out of 850,000. That was a little awkwardness because one, the Gazans didn't really like that the US Embassy in Tel Aviv was their American contact so to speak. They preferred to deal with the Consulate in Jerusalem, for example, to get visas. They didn't want to show that they had visas issued in the US Embassy in Tel Aviv, they were much happier to show that they had visas issued in the American Consulate General in Jerusalem. When they went across the bridges to Jordan and elsewhere in the Arab world that was a less problematic point of issue for a visa than Tel Aviv. But in fact of course what we were trying to do in Jerusalem, we were trying to report on what was happening in the West Bank in Jerusalem itself. Because in fact, this has always been a problem, I think, that in fact you were suppose to have, Jerusalem is suppose to be your turf, Jerusalem and the West Bank. But in fact of course the seat of the Israeli government is in Jerusalem and that's the Embassy's turf. So there was a certain amount of schizophrenia in that situation. The Consulate General is not accredited to any government except perhaps to the Mayor of Jerusalem. Teddy Kollek was my principal Israeli point of reference, he was a pleasant man and a joy to work with. And I'm sorry he's not still the Mayor but of course it's a bit frustrating because you're dealing with the Palestinians who are intensely concerned with what the US is doing and thinking. Some of that syndrome that, well example Tom Friedman described in his book From Beirut to Jerusalem, about the Lebanese, that they really thought that some morning the

Americans would wake up and make a new president of Lebanon. You know, this kind of omnipotence kind of feeling they had. So they were constantly taking our calls and we were constantly taking theirs. It's a bit incestuous but you had some very interesting characters to work with. Elias Freij the Mayor of Bethlehem is an extremely fine man. And of course was a prophet not honored in his own country because he had been preaching for 15 years what the Palestinians should be doing vis-#-vis the Israelis. And of course now they're doing it, which is talking directly. So Freij was very interesting. Natche the mayor of Hebron whom the Israelis deposed but in fact most of us considered him the legitimate political leader in Hebron. Natche is a very, very astute political animal. Then there's the crowds in Nablus—The Kanaan clan and the Musris. So there was a hierarchy, not a hierarchy, there's a political establishment which is now mostly gone. These people are much less influential now than they were then.

Q: We're talking about the mid-80's. You were going, I mean these were some of your principal points of contact for political reporting. Just a little how-to which I think is interesting. What would you do, go down and chat with them, sort of have an agenda? What would you do?

CLUVERIUS: Well there were 2 things you wanted to do. One of course was to keep your finger on the pulse of day-to-day events. And of course there were frequently day-to-day events. And I think it was the week that I arrived as Consul General in '83, which was after the 4th of July party.

Q: You mentioned that the last time.

CLUVERIUS: There was the shooting at the Islamic University in Hebron.

Q: What was that?

CLUVERIUS: Some Israeli settlers went out and shot up the student union or something like that and there were people killed. And it was some crazy guys from Kiryat Arba or

wherever they were from, I'm trying to remember. But the interesting thing was my USIS guy, the Cultural Affairs kind of guy in the Consulate, was in the office of the President of the University when this shooting started. He grabbed the phone off the President's desk and called me. And you could hear the shooting in the background and he was lying on the floor. It went on for some time. So there were those kinds of dramatic events. But of course you were always trying to keep up with which Palestinian groups were influential where. There was always the disputes amongst the Palestinians of the West Bank themselves. Along what you might call the traditional fault lines in the society. The Hebronites didn't trust the people from Nablus, certain clans didn't trust other clans. There's also the town and the village disputes. At that time also the Israelis were pushing something called the village leagues. Which was trying to create basically a collaborative group of Palestinians. That didn't work. Its probably long forgotten but it did create a lot of tension among the Palestinians. There was a guy named Dhudin, whom I think was from the southern part of the West Bank. And they tried to set him up as the leader of the village leagues, which would be those Palestinians who were willing to cooperate with the Israelis. Not in the sense that Elias Freij of Bethlehem was talking about, which is the kind of thing that's going on now. It was basically collaboration for the village leagues. So you're trying to keep track of all these trends and all the fault lines. To what ultimate purpose other than to have the knowledge of what was going on and who was doing what to whom. At that time there wasn't a hell of a lot of ultimate purpose. But it was always felt that whatever was going on in the broader peace process, you really had to know what the Palestinians were thinking and what they were feeding to the Jordanians, what they were feeding to the PLO leadership in Tunis. Which of course at that time was only a year or two after having been thrown out of Lebanon. And Arafat was becoming increasingly irrelevant, to the joy of the Israelis, until he was rescued as a political animal really by the Intifada which broke out in '87. The uprising in the fall of '87. Which still goes on in some way. So you're always trying to know what these folk were up to. Now some of the means you used, one of the things you had to be careful of was that the Palestinians had the smarts of the survivors. And very carefully they tell the Israelis one thing, they tell the Americans another, they

tell the British another, the Jordanians something else and the PLO in Tunis probably got a different story. And this wasn't malicious dissembling, this is what survivors do. Also try to find some advantage in the fault lines of the world around them. Just like we were trying to understand the fault lines in their political culture. But that was always kind of fun. And of course then an Israeli election came along. You would have the various Israeli parties dabbling in the Palestinian political scene. Trying to find people they could work with, trying to find people who could carry accurate messages to the Jordanians, to the PLO or whatever. Some of the means we used were pretty straightforward. Traditional political reporting means you go out and have coffee with the guy and we all knew each other quite well because it's not all that big a piece of turf. It wasn't hard to have a meeting at 10:00 and have coffee in Hebron and then be back in East Jerusalem for lunch and go to a dinner party in Nablus. We also had a political officer, Tom Dodling, who was a very clever fellow. He had very good Arabic and spent a lot of time in the old city. He met a guy who reads coffee grounds and there are certain events, kinds of groups that meet and they'll have somebody in to read the coffee grounds. Not that anybody believes it but it's kind of traditional. Kind of traditional stuff. But what was interesting was that very often the meetings amongst the notables of the West Bank in which they would have this traditional event take place were meetings in which we'd be very interested to know what was going on. We'd find out from the “coffee grounder.” They often did this for example when they received some important Israeli official, particularly a Labor Party official or something like that.

Q: Did you ever, for example, and this could probably work both ways, in perspective, see a report that would come out of our Embassy in Tel Aviv and say—Gee, that's really presenting one point of view, in a way fair enough? In other words, frame some of your reporting to show the other side of the moon on this. In order to give a balanced view?

CLUVERIUS: Absolutely. But usually you would, if your relations were good, and I think ours were when I was in Jerusalem, they usually are between the Embassy and Jerusalem. You'd usually know in advance that someone was working on a matter that

would kind of illuminate this subject from the Israeli perspective. And it would be useful if Jerusalem would do a counter-piece that would illuminate it. So that it'd often be done cooperatively. Now on fast breaking stories, you might have to do it by phone very quickly. You know the Embassy might call and say we're going to do this. Or I might call and say, Look this is what the papers are saying, it ain't right from what I'm getting. You know what the press are saying and all of that. There's something else back here that's going on. And here's how I'm going to play it. Occasionally you might be in conflict with what the Embassy is reporting but very rarely.

Q: I would think that on your reports, a report that would be eagerly awaited, or maybe not eagerly awaited, but expected would be on the human rights side. Essentially we have an Israeli at this time, an Israeli occupying force in a land that doesn't want it. And the Israelis are not sweet, kind, considerate and gentle people particularly when they feel that their national security is at stake. Can yon talk about what you would do, how you went about it and the problems therein?

CLUVERIUS: You do pretty straight reporting jobs. The Israelis were saying as they did and even for a number of years they published an annual report published by. what was called a Civil Administration which means the military occupation government, basically. To say how wonderful it all was and what a benign occupation it was and all the things we've done for the local folk in the past year. It was pretty kind of outrageous PR stuff. But we would take it and my staff would tear that thing apart in a report to Washington. And say this is BS, and back it up. The annual Human Rights Report is a big problem because human rights is not a black and white subject. One man's violation is another man's benign mistake. And the way we did it was to call a spade a spade and the politicking would take place in Washington between the bureau, NEA, and the Human Rights Bureau. And depending on who was running, which political animals, which political appointees were in the Human Rights bureau, you'd have a hard time or an easy time getting the facts published as we saw them in the field. There was a lot of negotiation over language,

you know lots of negotiations over adjectives and stuff like that. You know, it's a painful process.

Q: Elliott Abrams was not the Human Rights person when you were there, was he?

CLUVERIUS: No, I think he was an IO person at the time. There were some other political appointees, frankly whose names I can't remember and don't want to remember. They could be pretty tough. There was a negotiation in Washington one year I recall, it was really trading off language. The people in the Human Rights thing were pretty protective of the Israelis, but they wanted to land with both feet on the Syrians. So you had some tradeoffs. I mean you can't use those terrible adjectives about the Syrians unless you let us use reasonably descriptive adjectives about the Israelis.

Q: Just to give an idea to move one layer down, what were some of the problems that you were reporting on with the Israelis in dealing with the people there in the West Bank?

CLUVERIUS: You mean on the ground problems. Well you had continued land expropriations. I remember we did lengthy reporting on the Israel claim that this is all state land. And therefore the state can exercise eminent domain etc., etc. And we did some very extensive historical reporting. Because in fact there had been, just before the '67 war, the Jordanian government was going through the West Bank, north to south, modernizing the records and things which traditionally are held by the Muktar of the village, some of it is almost verbal. Because everybody knows that Muhammad's land extends from this rock to that tree and over to this. And in fact the Jordanians had only designated about 17% of what they had covered as state land; they had not reached south of Jerusalem. Only about 17% of it was designated state land which meant roadways, rights of way, things like that. Whereas the Israelis were claiming huge percentages of state land. And made the argument that as an occupier you can't change the status. But of course there were some very complicated Ottoman rules of squatters rights and kind of thing—how many years has

this land been tilled by this family before ownership passes. And all kinds of things. But we would tear into those subjects to illuminate the facts.

Q: Had the Israelis confiscated? I heard in stories that taking the records and putting them somewhere meant they had control over, they could call the shots because people didn't have the original records.

CLUVERIUS: Sure and very often they got some of it by bribery by Muktars who did hold the records of the whole village. And if he turned those records over to the Israeli authorities then they knew who owned what and they could make the records disappear or whatever. There were a lot of very sophisticated shenanigans going on about land. And of course the Palestinians were almost always the losers on that. So it was very difficult. And if Palestinians could prove a claim that land had been taken, at any time in the recent historical past, then they had to go through the Israeli legal system. Which occasionally gave some justice in that, but not often.

Q: What about, was Israeli settlements going on at that time?

CLUVERIUS: Oh sure.

Q: Could you talk about that and how you were viewing, reporting your impression?

CLUVERIUS: You were getting that and you getting this tide from the Likud government, you know they really put a lot of investment out there. Lots of people moved out there for purely economic reasons. Some land would be expropriated for a settlement by the government and the military would fence it, the Jewish National fund would pay for the bulldozers and the infrastructure, the housing was subsidized, the water and electricity rates were lower than Israel proper. So a guy could get 3 times as much house for the same money. But then again you also had the ideological characters and people forget, perhaps, but for the most part the settlers in North Sinai who as you recall had to be moved out as part of the treaty with Egypt, most of those real settlers took compensation

from the Israeli government for about 300,000 some dollars per family and left. It was the hard line ideological settler,,, who had then moved from the West Bank, particularly from Hebron's Kiryat Arba, moved into those settlements. Those are the ones you saw on TV in the Spring of '82. They had to bring them out, water cannons, they were threatening suicide. Those were not for the most part the settlers who had lived there the previous decade. They had already been bought out. These were the bard-line guys, the ideologues. Who moved down from the West Bank into the settlements, in the Yammit area. That was a full swing in the early 80's. It really got going after the Likud came to power in '77. So there were settlements going and there were increasing numbers of these very vocal folk. And you were getting these very vocal folk from Brooklyn who were bringing in a lot of money. And in traditional American social and political activism they were really rocking the local boats. They were always trying to get me into a settlement. Claiming that they were on the West Bank and the Consulate General had to provide services to Americans in the West Bank and why wouldn't I show up at the settlements. I would send my vice-consul out there and sure enough there they had a TV camera crew it was a setup to get recognition for the settlement. You know, it's a silly game but that's part of things.

Q: But then you had to watch it.

CLUVERIUS: At the same time it was a legitimate claim to the services. So I just sent the most junior vice-consul out there, renew passports or whatever needed doing.

Q: The settlers, were they, the ones from America? Were they keeping their American passports tucked in the back pants pocket or not?

CLUVERIUS: For the most part yes, you had Levinger, who was one of the founders of the settlements in Hebron. His wife had been an American but gave up her citizenship. While I was Consul General we served Meir Kahane with his loss of citizenship papers. Which I think ultimately was overturned at the court anyway. Because, the way the law is written,

it's almost impossible to deny anyone citizenship anymore. You have to prove intent. And as any lawyer will tell you, intent is almost impossible to prove. But it was kind of fun to send the notification of loss of citizenship over to Kahane's house.

Q: He was the head of the Jewish Defense League. What was your impression of the settlers? Were there constant confrontations with the Palestinians?

CLUVERIUS: There were some. And it was growing because their numbers and their aggressiveness in the streets were growing- People were looking for a little bit of trouble I think. Of course Levinger had served 5 months for killing a guy in the streets of Hebron, a Palestinian. And you had more and more of that. And of course it was that summer, I think '83 or '84, but in '81 there were attempts on the lives of 3 or 4 prominent Palestinian mayors done by some underground Jewish group. And they finally broke into it and arrested these folk, I think it may have been '84 or '85 when they broke the case. But it took them maybe 3 or 4 years. In the Spring of '84, a group, thank God, was caught preparing to blow up the Dome of the Rock mosque on the temple mount. And they were caught fortuitously because the Muslim mosque guards are not armed, It was a rainy, cold spring night and they heard the noise and saw these guys coming up the ladders with satchels of grenades and explosives and all of this. But nearby was an Israeli unit that would not normally have been there. They were preparing to do a sweep of the temple mount the next morning because I think it was the German Chancellor who was visiting. So it was just fortuitous that these guys were caught. But so, yes, all of this was happening, you had the Gush Emunim which were shall we say ideologically motivated but not to the violent extremes of the Kahena movements. These guys were dangerous and the Israelis were very nervous about it. But they had a very hard time penetrating these groups and I think they still do. Because, one, they didn't take them seriously enough to begin with and, two, it's all done by face-to-face contact. It's hard to infiltrate small dedicated movements where everybody is known to everybody else.

Q: You were mentioning the shooting at the University. What happened there?

CLUVERIUS: That was the summer of '83.

Q: How did the Israelis respond to the shooting? What happened to the people who did the shooting?

CLUVERIUS: I'm trying to remember, I cannot. You'll have to look in the newspapers, I think. Whether they caught anybody for that, or not, I just don't recall on that particular event.

Q: It strikes me. You say that Levinger killed somebody in the street and he got 5 months?

CLUVERIUS: Something like that. A reduced sentence for manslaughter or something.

Q: I would think that at a certain point it would be very difficult for an American who is not ideologically in any camp, the Palestinian camp, the Israeli camp, the American-Jewish camp or something. To be sitting there watching a group of settlers, we're talking about these Israeli settlers who are coming in armed, who seem to be treated very leniently. Who are able to use armed force and all against the Palestinians. Because every time something happens, it's still going on even today, it always seems that if anything happens in Israel, it ends up a bunch of Palestinians including women and children getting killed. I would think that if the Jews are caught who have done this, I mean they get 5 months or something. I would think that this would buildup a feeling of outrage after a while. It would be very difficult.

CLUVERIUS: It was rather disgusting as these guys would get caught on the Israeli side, the Jewish side. And even if they got a pretty stiff sentence they would get a presidential pardon down the road somewhere. And of course some of them were American citizens who would go on trial. We would have a Vice-Consul go attend the trial. And of course it was like a circus and these guys showing open contempt for the court and taking their sentences as a badge of honor. And then being treated basically as good boys gone wrong and first they would get weekends off to spend with their family and then they'd get

a presidential pardon. While for exactly the same offense a Palestinian might be doing 18 years. Now in the wake of this Hebron massacre thing, it comes out—Oh my God, there's been 2 laws. I mean that's just the funniest thing you've ever seen. Of course there's been 2 laws and 2 applications of the same law or whatever you want to call it. Obviously people were treated differently under different circumstances.

Q: Could you explain, we're talking in 1994, could you just explain for the record what the Hebron massacre was?

CLUVERIUS: The most recent one? Harold Goldstein one of the very ideologically motivated settlers probably part of the Kach movement, going into the mosque in Hebron which is a divided building, because it's the also the tomb of the patriarchs and it's very important, to the Jews and the Christians as well. And just during Ramadan on a Friday shooting up 7 clips of ammunition from a Galil assault rifle and killing dozens, 30 people or more, and 60 or 70 wounded. Before the crowd managed to kill him. And that has put a spotlight on both the militant settlers and the Israeli attitude and treatment of Palestinians vis-#-vis their attitudes and treatments towards the Jews.

Q: I assume that you were reporting it and others were reporting it, there have been 2 laws and 2 ways of looking at it. It took something like this in 1994 for it to at least reach the headline.

CLUVERIUS: I think some of it came out during those first months of the Intifada which broke out in about December '87. In the first 3 or 4 months you had enormous amount of TV time and headline time devoted to what was happening. Which was basically the young people of the streets in Gaza and the West Bank taking on the Israelis with stones. So there was a lot of dramatic stuff there. We're going to break their bones kinds of things from Rabin who was Defense Minister and there was some extremely damaging footage for Israel's image. You know, heavily armed soldiers beating the bejesus out of some 15 year old. So this isn't the first time, this most recent event. It tends to be cyclical. It comes

and goes and its all over the papers and CNN and then nothing happens. It goes back to being a fact which is no longer a public fact. And there's lot of facts out there that aren't public facts.

Q: Did all of this have an effect not only on you but on 'your officers that you have to work, on it? It's a difficult thing to be in the country, of what is considered to be a very close friend of the United States where you feel that, you know, tremendous injustice is being done or being misreported. I mean how did this affect you?

CLUVERIUS: I think it affects you. It's saddening, and occasionally it's maddening that on some occasions it's very difficult to get the attention. And of course at that time between the Likud and the Reagan administration there was a close ideological match, so to speak, which I think was nonsense. But it was played up very simplistically in conservative circles here. Which was—Oh, the Israelis now have a conservative government so they must be ideologically closer to us than that Labor Party bunch they've had for years. Which was nonsense. But the Israelis were smart and they played it up to their advantage as they played up the relationship with the religious fundamentalists in this country. They got a lot of support there.

Q: We're talking about the religious fundamentalists, the religious right of the Christians, the Baptists and other groups of this nature.

CLUVERIUS: Yeah, there was certainly an alliance there of that kind. I think it was rather nonsense. Then of course you had the other propaganda line or whatever it was called, the strategic asset. That Israel was a strategic asset in the Middle East of the United States. And that was played up by a lot of Israeli politicians. And was welcomed in the Reagan administration, I think. That this was a strategic asset. That made a lot of Israelis very nervous because a lot of them were thoughtful Israelis, shall we say, who understood that the real relationship between the United States and Israel is founded on something more profound than “strategic assets”, which can be a passing phenomenon.

Q: How did you deal with Junior Officers? By the time you reach the rank you had you take a more world weary point of view. You understand political realities and all of this but Junior Officers come in with piss in vinegar and they are learning it's a pretty awful world out there, no matter where you are. And they take causes much more to heart than we do. Maybe they?re right. But anyway, you must have had a problem, not a problem, but it was a challenge to you with your Junior Officers.

CLUVERIUS: Not really so much a challenge. If there had been a great deal of, shall we say naive idealism, amongst young folk. I think it disappeared after a while. These Junior Officers I was dealing with anyway, had their own cynical experiences and views. You know, the Vietnam thing and all of that. They already knew about a world in which all of justice is not done. Even when many people are screaming out that the emperor has no clothes, the emperor may still continue on. So I didn't see that as a problem. As a general sense what you would occasionally get was a member of the staff would get totally outraged at something that was going on. Some specific kind of injustice or wrong being done. And really want to make a huge issue out of it. You might have to sit down and say —Look, this one, you're right, but I don't see the backing for it, politically, to fix it. And that might occasionally entail a serious discussion with the Embassy in Tel Aviv. Saying that you guys have more clout and this one really is a outrageous. Such as a denial of consular access to an American citizen or something like that. Cause we did have American-Palestinians out there as well as Jewish settlers from Brooklyn. Events of specific outrage, yeah. And yes, perhaps the younger people would feel that more keenly than those of us who had seen more of it.

Q: Let's say you get a case where a Palestinian-American, the Israeli won't let you have access. This is always the great cause in consular business. This is where you really get on your high horse and wave the flag. Did you have to get the Embassy support?

CLUVERIUS: Well, the Consulate couldn't deal directly with the government of Israel, we could deal with other kinds of authorities out there. But then you don't have a problem

because the Ambassador would jump on them and the Embassy would jump on them and say, “Get off, this is unacceptable.” And it usually got fixed pretty quickly.

Q: What was your impression of the Israeli army? I'm asking this because the image of the Israeli army in the United States, maybe it's diminished somewhat. But that this is a very well oiled-machine, very efficient, knows what it's doing and yet when you look at it closely you have the feeling that here are the soldiers who are quite willing to fire. Almost as though they're treating the Palestinians like a subspecies or something like that. Did you have any feel for this looking at it on the ground?

CLUVERIUS: I think there's been a trend in the Israeli military that immediately after they took these territories in the '67 war under Moshe Dayan's both practical and philosophical direction, they put very good people out there. Some of their best Lieutenant-Colonels and Brigadiers who would be in charge, who understood that they were going to have to rule these people for a while. They wanted to do so in a way that would not ultimately damage the possibilities of making peace with them. They were very careful about confiscations, the settlement issue didn't start in full swing at that time. There was pretty good quality out there. And there was also close direction from the top. There was in the Labor Party in the late '60's quite a dispute, a philosophical dispute. Whether they should increase the number of work permits in Israel for the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. That this might be socially damaging to Israel. To have these people come and be the drawers of water and the hewers of wood. That argument was basically won by the pragmatists led by Dayan. He said, I don't care about your philosophical argument. I've got these people in Gaza, they have to work. Otherwise, we're going to have a hell of a mess. So the pragmatists won that one. And of course by the time of the Intifada in late '87, you had about 100,000 Arabs a day working in Israel. Gradually when the Likud government came into power, a decade after the '67 war, in '77, they had quite a different view since they had no intention of ever giving up that land. So you're going to deal with the people quite differently. And they increased the settlement budget. Even though ultimately as Abba Eban called it, it was a failed enterprise; the settlement effort, but nevertheless it was a

different attitude. And there was also a different attitude within the military. Gradually there had been, you know people don't like to go places where the job isn't career enhancing. And after the first 6 or 7 years, I don't think West Bank, Gaza assignments were career enhancing at all. And they were at first. The military government in Gaza in the late '60's, right after '67, was Mota Gur, who is now the Deputy Defense Minister, and he was very good at it as I recall. Because I covered Gaza from the Embassy then. But gradually the quality went down. The attitude toward the folk hardened or became less-sensitive, however you want to call it. Plus, you had the ideological drive of a right-wing government that really had no intention of doing anything except arranging things so that it would be impossible to give up those territories. Which they didn't succeed in doing. But they made a hell of a lot of trouble in between. You began to get little snippets of things in the newspapers. That so-and-so had been arrested for his activities while he was the junior military governor in Jenin, or one of the smaller towns. You know, the occupation began to corrupt. On the basis of the old saying, when you have absolute power it's corrupting and they had absolute power. And there began to be more and more tales of bribery by the Palestinians and of course this was terribly cancer like for the Israeli military. When a Palestinian bribed some captain or major in order to get his zoning permission to add a room to his house, he got his house and also had committed a nationalist act of which he could be proud. But of course the Israeli was corrupted. And you also got some Israelis increasingly, with very little publicity, refusing to serve in the territories. Very often this was handled as just: Okay, next time you come on reserve duty, we'll send you to the Negev or something. But on some occasions people were punished for refusing to go, didn't want to serve in the West Bank, did not want to go out there and break heads. So all of this occupation really was corrupting and it certainly did affect the army. It affected their morale, it affected their attitude towards these people. Because, after all, these people out in the streets throwing stones at them were about the same age. They're teenagers. And for awhile of course the really nasty work wasn't done by the army anyway. It was done by the border guards. So the army is kind of there as the background as the ultimate

source of power and authority but didn't have to do much. Until the Intifada started in '87, the border guards did most of the dirty work.

Q: Were the border guards a different breed at that?

CLUVERIUS: Yes, the border guards are often, they had a lot of Druze. You see, the Druze do serve in the Israeli army. The Israeli-Arabs do not, but the Druze do. There are Druze and they're tough and they don't like the Arabs very much. They're pretty tough and they are different units. They're not regular army units, they're border guards and they are the ones that chase the infiltrators in the Jordan Valley on those rare occasions when they come across and things like that. They're the trackers and they do indeed guard the border in a military sense but with a kind of police function. But they're the ones that they used if there were some trouble in the refugee camp. They were the ones who'd go charging in there, break a few heads and see what was going on. But once it became very wide-spread, this kind of uprising, then the army had to get into it, including reservists. Because the border guards were not that large an organization so the army had to get into it. Some of them didn't like it.

Q: Well is there anything else we should cover? On Jerusalem, you think?

CLUVERIUS: I don't think so.

Q: On this thing, by the way when you get the draft, you can add or expand anyway you want.

CLUVERIUS: Of course some of that has been used though.

Q: So let's move on. Back there in 1985, what did you do?

CLUVERIUS: In the summer of '85 there was of course, following the expulsion, you know, of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in June '82, and of course the completion of the Egyptian-Israeli Treaty was the end of April '82. And then there was the commitment

to the Egyptians, to the other Arabs, that we would then make a big push to implement the other half of Camp David. Which was the West Bank thing. And of course the Likud government had no intention of giving anymore. But it was felt then, of course the Israelis invaded Lebanon, and that delayed the whole thing, the Fall of '82. Alexander Haig was fired or quit, whatever. George Shultz took over feeling he had to make a real push on this Lebanon thing. I think there was a debate, a conflict so to speak, in the Fall of '82. Remember there was a Reagan Initiative that September 1st of '82 which Ned Walker, Bill Kirby and I wrote. Charlie Hill, who put the finishing touches on it as the wordsmith. And then we were going to push forward with the Middle East process. At that point there was a real policy disagreement, basically. On the one hand there were those who said: Fine, we'll push the Lebanon angle. and bring Lebanon to be the second country to have peace with Israel. But I was not in that group. I was in another group which were the losers, basically, that said: Forget Lebanon, push the main peace process elements of the Reagan Initiative and let Lebanon come along, wagging its tail behind it. Don't make Lebanon the center piece. One, they can't make the Treaty, there's no government there, they can't make the Treaty, Syria won't let them. But this line lost really. It was the Lebanon push: Get the PLO out, make a deal, And it's described best I think in Tom Friedman's book. But it was a policy difference. I think the late Phil Habib didn't so us a service there. Phil had such prestige in this town. If he said he could bring the Syrians and the Lebanese towards a Lebanon-Israel Treaty, people tended to believe him. Why not. I mean Phil had enormous prestige, a wonderful man. But he didn't really come to the Middle East until he had been Under Secretary of Political Affairs. And he really thought he could deliver. He was also personally angry at the Israelis and the Syrians because he had worked the deal in '81. So anyway, by the time '83 came around I had been back in Washington since '78.

Q: Well '85.

CLUVERIUS: Yeah. But that was the background to Shultz's push to try to get a Peace Process going. Dick Murphy was Assistant Secretary, Dick was spending an awful lot of

time on this and it wasn't going very well. Because we couldn't talk to the PLO and you couldn't do all these other things. And of course George Shultz had much bigger fish to fry vis-#-vis the Soviets and other major issues. But he thought Murphy was spending too much time on this. So they asked me if I would leave the job in Jerusalem early, because it was a 3 year assignment and I'd been there just a little over 2, and stay in the area and become the roving Peace Process guy. And with some doubts about it, I said sure I'd do it, because when the boss says you do it, you're a pro, you do it. But I made a deal I had to stay in Israel as a base, I had to talk to the Jordanians and some other people because my daughter was in high school in Israel, in the American school in Tel Aviv. And I didn't want to leave there and I also didn't want to leave the house in Jerusalem until January of '86. But actually I started this roving business based in Israel in the Fall of '85, that Labor Day weekend. I was back here in Washington, King Hussein of Jordan was here, that was when we first tried to get something going. That was basically what I did until the summer of '88. You know the Intifada started and we had various initiatives some of which were secret at the time and now are not. It was basically trying to see if there was any way to get the Peace Process going. It was very difficult of course because you had a Likud government. Then Shamir became Prime Minister, Arens is Defense Minister, these are people who either voted against or abstained on the Treaty of Peace with Egypt. You know they had not a lot of interest in this. Shultz I think gave it his very conscientious good shot but he didn't like the Middle East issues. He thought people were extremely tricky to deal with. lie thought a lot of them were dishonest and lied to him on one occasion or another. It didn't have all the nice cleanness of going to an ASEAN meeting in Singapore where the issues are economic and the people are knowledgeable and straight forward. Middle East was a mess. And at the same time he had to deal with the Conservatives back here, people who never thought he was on the “Reagan team” and there was all this sniping. And of course his big issue in life as the Secretary of State had to be relations with the Soviets. Where I think he did win. I found that part of his own book very interesting. So I knew I was working for a guy who's conscience was in trying to make something happen in the Middle East but his political judgment probably was that it wasn't really do-able but

you've got to keep trying. And of course then I was the guy who had to run around and keep trying. And it was a little frustrating.

Q: Let's talk a bit about, I suppose maybe try this country by country, I mean maybe that might be the easiest way to do this. What would you do in Egypt? They were already in the Peace Process, did they have a role in a way?

CLUVERIUS: They had a role in a big way. They were trying to bring the PLO into the orbit of respectability, shall we say, by trying to push the PLO to meet the American conditions for dialogue. They were also trying to get the Americans to manipulate those conditions so they'd be easier to meet. And of course all of this finally did happen in the Fall of '88. And the Egyptians worked very hard in the Peace Process. Not only out of conscience, which I think is genuine, but also out of a desire not to be so goddamn isolated in the Arab world. Even though the Arab League headquarters had been taken out of Cairo and there was no money flowing through from the Gulf Banks and the Gulf fees and all of this. So they had a pragmatic, and political and diplomatic and moral reason to push the Peace Process. To work with the Jordanians and all of this. And of course we had that strange Israeli government that came along in the elections of '84. The rotational government that Peres would serve as Prime Minister for 2 years and then Shamir would be Prime Minister for 2 years. And meanwhile Rabin would remain as Defense Minister throughout. And that was very strange. And as that came to an end, Rabin and Peres worked very hard trying to get something going. The problem was that on the Arab side, my sense of it was, the Jordanians and the Palestinians didn't think that Peres could deliver. They were a little nervous about him, some Israelis, that he's a little flaky. I don't personally think that's true. I happen to be an admirer of Shimon's. It's just that the pieces weren't there. And Shultz would come out and we would run around and then he would go away and I would run around and try to make something work. As it came closer to Peres having to give up the Premiership of his government, which was really a national-unity government, which was a national paralysis government actually, but when he had to give up the Premier-,hip of course he would lose a lot of the levers available to him that he was trying to pull to get

something going in the Peace Process. I think the Americans, including me, I suppose, and George Shultz certainly, we thought we had to get something going so that Peres can put something in place that the other guy can't tear down. And we got a little frantic about it, trying to get something going and yet refusing to agree to what the Arab side said they had to have. And this is where I did have problems with George Shultz and his immediate staff. He said no international conference because the Israelis didn't want it. But in fact the only way you were going to get these folks under one roof was under the label of an international conference which had the UN flag, at least, standing in the corner. Because the Israelis didn't want it, Shultz wouldn't push for it and I kept writing messages that there is no way forward except through an international conference. And I would get phone calls saying what are you smoking out there'? The Secretary doesn't want one. And I would say, I don't care, I'm supposed to tell him what I think would work and what I think won't work. But Shultz was always very nice about that but in fact that was what was needed. Shultz would keep concentrating on what can we do to help Peres. A public meeting between Peres and the King of Jordan. The King wasn't having any part of it. He kept saying: Look I told you, I'll meet Peres or whoever under the UN flag in an international conference. Which of course is what eventually happened in Madrid in '91 but that could have happened in '86 or '87, but it didn't.

Q: What was the opposition about for the international meeting in Israel and why were we buying into this? I mean why were the Israelis opposed to having an international meeting and why did we?

CLUVERIUS: Because the Israelis always want direct discussions. They thought the international conference would dilute that, it would dilute the value to them of dealing directly with their neighbors and their enemies. On the other hand, it would provide a forum in which they could be ganged up on by the world community . In fact that was BS most of it. In fact they didn't want a conference, because they didn't want to talk about these issues. The Likud didn't want to talk about these issues. The status quo with them

in control of the occupied territories was far more appealing to them then any possible alternative to the status quo.

Q: So the key player didn't want to play?

CLUVERIUS: And there were endless excuses why they didn't want to play this game or that game and you could reshuffle the deck but in fact he didn't want to play cards. So the constant effort to find a card that might appeal to him was doomed from the outset, basically. Because he'd always have a reason for saying: No, no I can't do that because; Oh I'm still interested in the Peace Process but I can't do this, I can't do this, I can't do anything. So it was frustrating. But it's also a useful part of diplomacy. With something as sensitive and important as that, you have to keep trying. And even though you may have a private judgment that it isn't going to go anywhere, you have to keep it alive.

Q: You keep it alive, I mean the basic thing that sort of sustained you, would it be I, obviously you're doing your job. But the other one did you have the feeling that, okay, the players that are in place right now, I mean the Likud and all, things change. I mean you never know what's going to happen. And you've got to keep the apparatus alive because who knows what's going to happen.

CLUVERIUS: That's right and also I think it was worth doing. It was worth doing for the United States, it was worth doing on, shall we say, humanitarian and ethical grounds to end that miserable conflict. And things do change. You had rising stars in the Likud who had quite a different view in some of these things. Like David Levy who once he became Foreign Minister did play a subtly different role. So people do change, Begin disappeared from the scene, along comes Shamir. People do change. And you also have to know it as a professional in diplomacy. Sometimes going through the motions is necessary even though you know that you're probably not going to get anywhere on this particular round of going through the motions. You might have to do it a year or two in order to refine the

issues, keep things alive, clear a little underbrush but no breakthrough is to the cards. But you still have to keep the ground reasonably well tilled until something new can spring up.

Q: How would you till the ground? J mean what would you do personally?

CLUVERIUS: Well there were a couple of occasions when we were making a real effort through the Jordanians or the Egyptians to having the PLO meet our conditions. And so it was, under law, that I couldn't meet directly with the PLO. You'd have to work through various intermediaries such as the government of Jordan. And so you would try that for an intensive 2 or 3 week period until you realized that wasn't going to happen. Because also Arafat was in a very weak position following the expulsion of the PLO from Beirut in '82. He was searching for a role and while someone is searching for a role he's not in a position to make great concessions. Because he probably couldn't deliver on them anyway. But you nevertheless kept pushing along.

Q: Who would you meet with say in Jordan or in Egypt?

CLUVERIUS: In Jordan usually with the Prime Minister who was then Zaid Rifai, occasionally with the King. The King in conference with the Foreign Minister and these guys. In Egypt usually with the Foreign Minister, Ismat Abdul Majid was the Foreign Minister through that period. And occasionally we do a stop in Damascus to keep the Syrians at least informed of what we were doing. Not that they agreed with any of it. And I'd have to go down to the Gulf to see the Saudi Foreign Minister occasionally, just to make sure they understood where we were coming from, what we were trying to do. Again you keep the ground tilled because something of interest might spring up even though you're not really expecting it.

Q: Did you have any problems with Congress? Would they get into the act at all, the staff or the members of Congress, about what you were trying to do?

CLUVERIUS: No. The tendency is to get involved when things are very high visibility. This was a period of very low visibility, And I think as far as that Administration went, '86 would have been the end of it.

Q: That was the end of Peres.

CLUVERIUS: Yeah, and that might have been the end of it for the United States in any serious way except for the Intifada breaking out in the Fall of '87. In which George Shultz, I think he felt he really owed it, with all of this miserable stuff happening, he really owed it to himself, to everything and to the United States to make another effort at it. And he did but it was election year and it just wasn't going to go.

Q: Did you retire then? When did you retire?

CLUVERIUS: June of '88.

Q: You've been concerned with the Middle East process since that time haven't you?

CLUVERIUS: Only had one small piece of it called Peace Keeping.

Q: Could you explain, as long as we're covering, it's not just professional within the Foreign Service, but what have you been doing since '88?

CLUVERIUS: The Peace Treaty between Egypt and Israel was to be observed and monitored by United Nations peace-keeping force according to the Treaty. It was pretty clear at the time of the Treaty signing that the Arabs were outraged by Egypt making a separate peace with Israel. They would be supported by the Soviets and that the Soviets would prevent the UN from providing this peace-keeping force. So at that time Carter provided separate letters to Sadat, to Begin saying that if the UN cannot do what you ask it to do in your Treaty, the United States will undertake to find an alternative multinational force. And ultimately that was what the United States had to do. And that force was put

together, it was set up, it was on the ground by March of '82. Ready to monitor the terms of the Peace Treaty when the Israelis made their final withdrawal out of the Sinai. It was a separate protocol that had to be negotiated which was in the Summer of '81 as to what this alternative multinational force would do and how it would be run. And the negotiators found II countries to take part. They set up a structure in which the Force Commander in the field would be one of the nationalities that was participating in the organization but that his boss would be kind of a mini-Secretary General, a mini-Secretariat so that the General didn't have to deal in the political, the financial, the diplomacy stuff. He could run the Mission and he would have a boss and it was agreed that the boss would be a retired American of Ambassadorial rank. The first one was Ray Hunt who was assassinated in Rome, 10 years ago, February of '84.

Q: Why was he assassinated?

CLUVERIUS: No one really knows for sure. At that time of course the so-called Red Brigades, the bad guys, were riding pretty high in Italy. Some Italian intelligence sources believe that as Director General they thought he was a military general. And about that time, if you recall, they had kidnaped an American General Dozier, who was safely rescued. It was in that environment. No one knows if Ray was targeted because he was a General or because of his job. It didn't make a hell of a lot of difference to poor Ray, he was killed. So I was running that since the Summer of '88 replacing Peter Constable.

Q: What does the peace force consist of now?

CLUVERIUS: I've got 11 countries. On any given day about 2800 people go to work for the MFO, most of them in the Sinai. We have 2 locations, one near the Mediterranean end of the Sinai at El Gorah, one is at Sharm el Sheikh, the Strait of Tiran. I have 3 infantry battalions, one American, one Colombian and one Fijian. And they man some 33 outposts along the international border between Egypt and Israel and down the Gulf of Aqaba. An Italian naval unit of 3 ships patrol the Strait of Tiran to ensure that it's open to all

navigation. And I've got some helicopters, from the Americans. I've got a fixed-wing aircraft from the French and I've got Canadian and Norwegian staff officers. Uruguayan engineers, Dutch signalers and military police. Have I named II'? Canadian, Australian staff and it works. I've found it to be excessively expensive when I took over and I cut the budget about 30% in the last 2 years without any impact on the Mission.

Q: What do the troops do? I mean I understand what their job is, to sort of make sure that there isn't any intrusion, but things have been quiet for so long, how do they sort of keep their sanity?

CLUVERIUS: Yeah, the enemy is boredom. So what we do is spend a lot of money on recreation. Each camp has a gym that's open 24 hours a day and we try to make sure that all the soldiers get a tour to see the Holy Land, and to see the Pyramids. Extensive sports program and a lot of very good food. Young soldiers if you keep their bodies active and give them good food you've won the battle of morale. The actual mission can be relatively boring except in the few places where there's a lot of people crossing back and forth through the checkpoints, there's activity. But in some of these places they haven't seen anything in 10 years and they never will. Unless someone goes to war.

Q: I've talked to people who have been involved in the very early days of this and there was an awful lot of, sort of at the lower level but the Israeli, it's almost termed of being very pushy, trying to test out the system. You know trying to see how far they can go. I was wondering if this is pretty well ceased?

CLUVERIUS: Oh I think so, I'm sure. If it was ever there. The Israelis they did do some testing to make sure the organization does its work. Because we have all of these little provisions of the Treaty. The Sinai is divided into 3 zones. And there's a little zone on the Israeli side of the international border. And the Egyptians can only do certain things in those zones. And we monitor that. But it's totally routine. There's never been a serious violation of the Treaty by either side. Every year there's a couple of violations but they're

rather minor and technical kinds of things. Serious violations have never occurred. At the same time that's the mission of the organization drawn in small letters. If you write it in big letters, I think the mission has been in recent years to provide a sense of security to the Israelis on their western front while they wrestle with the problems of peace in the north and east. That's our psychological mission, shall we say. It's a confidence building presence that the Israelis don't have to worry over here. And of course these days they're a little more worried about Egypt then they used to be. Because of this challenge to the Mubarak regime.

Q: We're talking now about Arab fundamentalism is getting stronger in North Africa.

CLUVERIUS: Including unfortunately in Egypt and it's very damaging.

Q: You don't feel that this is an organization that's going to wither away?

CLUVERIUS: No, I think we could change rather dramatically if there are some big breakthroughs in the Peace Process say between the Israelis and the Palestinians, with the Jordanians and the Syrians coming along as well. Then I think you might have quite a different structure. I think the Mission will stay in some sense for quite awhile. But you could do it lots of different ways. You don't need 2100 troops out there and 500 civilian employees, if there is an expanded peace. You could do it in different ways.

Q: Well, Americans use it for training, don't they? Desert training?

CLUVERIUS: No, not really. It depends on who you talk to in the American army. What the value of the Mission is. You talk to the battalion commanders, they love it. Because it gives a lot of small unit independence and training at the squad and platoon level. If you talk to the battalions division commander, he's not so enthusiastic because he loses the battalion. Both for the training right up to the mission, 6 months on site, takes them a couple of months to reintegrate them into the division. So it depends on your point of view. Yeah, we could do the mission differently. We don't do it differently because the Israelis

right now really don't want a lot of changes in the MFO. Not that they don't understand there's other ways of doing this that could be equally effective and less costly but they just haven't got the psychic energy to deal with it right now. They've got other things on their agenda and they don't need it more crowded. And the Egyptians understand that. That's not a big problem.

End of interview